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new Masses

A MILLION TEXTILE WORKERS SAY STRIKE! by Carl Reeve • AMERICAN YOUTH REJECTS FASCISM by Theodore Draper • JEWS IN THE SOVIET UNION by Joshua Kunitz • DANIEL BOONE BELONGS TO US by Michael Gold • 5,000 FARMS FOR SALE by Edward Newhouse • WHO HIRED THE FRISCO COPS? An Editorial • CAROLINE DECKER'S STORY FROM JAIL

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*September

The American Mercury

DON'T BLAME THE MUNITIONS MAKERS
by F. C. Hanighen & H. C. Engelbrecht

Herbert Lehman: "Silent Dynamite"
Saul Levitt & Allan Chase

First Encounter	*Sigrid Undset*
Mussolini is Tottering	*Anthony M. Turano*
A Plea for Socialized Medicine	*George W. Aspinwall*
Peary Did Not Reach the Pole	*Henshaw Ward*
They Broke Our Strike	*John Mullen*
Cows and Horses Are Hungry	*Meridel LeSueur*
Mental Cruelty	*Sally Benson*
The American Karl Marx	*George Simpson*
Business Men Are Bewildered	*John L. Spivak*
The Soviets Fight Bureaucracy	*Anna Louise Strong*
Blind Flying is Not Safe	*Kenneth Brown Collings*
The Truth About Dentifrices	*Jerome W. Ephraim*
Fiddlers Are Dumber Than Pianists	*Edward Robinson*

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DON'T BLAME THE MUNITIONS MAKERS
by F. C. Hanighen & H. C. Engelbrecht

The authors of the recent "Merchants of Death" here discuss further the munitions racket, bringing forward many new ideas. They point out that doing away with arms manufacturers would do no good, because they do not make wars. Governments make wars, and in the end capitalism and nationalism make wars. War, therefore, cannot be abolished until capitalism and nationalism are abolished.

HERBERT LEHMAN: "SILENT DYNAMITE"
by Saul Levitt & Allan Chase

When Governor Lehman was elected all factions, liberal and conservative, were jubilant. It seemed that the ideal Governor had been found. Especially were the liberals happy, because they thought that he was interested in the lot of the underdog, and would push through legislation in his favor. This has proved to be far from the truth, as Messrs. Levitt and Chase point out, in a close examination of his record. Mr. Lehman was, is, and always will be a banker.

MUSSOLINI IS TOTTERING
by Anthony M. Turano

Mr. Turano has just returned from Italy, where he talked on intimate terms with members of various professions, and here reports in detail what they told him about their real feelings with regard to Il Duce. All of them—lawyers, farmers, engineers, business men—are bitter against Mussolini. He has brought his country only misery, and it is now in worse condition than it has been in for twenty years. That Il Duce is definitely on the way out seems to be beyond doubt.

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DON'T MISS THE SEPTEMBER ISSUE

FIRST ENCOUNTER
by Sigrid Undset

This is a new and very moving piece of autobiography by the celebrated Nobel Prize author. It deals with Madame Undset's first encounter with poverty in her childhood, and it is told with high effectiveness.

A PLEA FOR SOCIALIZED MEDICINE
by George W. Aspinwall

Dr. Aspinwall's "The Plight of the Doctor" in the May issue will be remembered. In the present article he presents the chief arguments for socialized medicine, and he ends by espousing the latter. He thinks that socialized medicine is the only form of medical service that is equitable both to physicians and to the public.

BUSINESS MEN ARE BEWILDERED
by John L. Spivak

Mr. Spivak, in the August issue, revealed the plight of the American laborer and farmer in his article, "Bitter Unrest Sweeps the Nation." This was written after a tour of the entire United States. The present article is his report of the plight of the smaller business man, and is based upon intimate conversation with hundreds of them. Mr. Spivak finds that while their attitude and outlook for the future cannot be defined as an absolute discouragement, it is one of bewilderment and helplessness.

THE TRUTH ABOUT DENTIFRICES
by Jerome W. Ephraim

Mr. Ephraim is a New York chemist of wide experience, and here tells some startling truths about tooth paste and mouth washes. He is the author of "The Truth About Soap" in the May issue.

THE TEACHERS' UNION
by Gertrude Diamant

In the past few years there has been a tremendous increase in legislation prejudicial to academic freedom among teachers, and the Teachers' Union, particularly in New York, has been vigorous in its protest. Miss Diamant tells in this article some of the present activities of the Teachers' Union, and outlines some further questions with which it should deal.

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AUGUST 28, 1934

Limbach

"SHORTLY great changes will occur full of big surprises," remarks a Manchukuoan newspaper following the Manchukuoan regime's break in unofficial diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. But who will be surprised? Surely nobody who has followed the recent openly provocative actions of the Japanese government and its puppet: Manchukuo (Manchuria). Hardly pretending to disguise its predatory foreign objectives, Japan's government is now preparing for outright seizure of the Chinese Eastern Railway owned jointly by Manchukuo and the U. S. S. R. The Soviet Union's offer to sell its share to Japan was rejected, on July 30, even though the price was less than a fourth of the real cost. Instead, Japanese officials have seized over 50 Soviet employes and imprisoned many of them—the stationmaster at Harbin, in jail since August 4, is reported on hunger strike. They have engineered more than sixteen railway wrecks, each time accusing the Soviet Union itself of the responsibility. During the past week they have cracked down on the cooperative shops traveling on the Chinese Eastern Railway, making it extremely difficult for the employes of the railway, many of whom are wholly dependent on these traveling cooperatives for everyday necessities. Complementing these provocations abroad, the Japanese capitalist newspapers have been printing reams of forgeries "proving" Soviet "bomb plots," etc., topping off each "sensational revelation" with a jingoistic peroration unprecedented even in the Tokio press. Harbin newspapers are accusing the Soviet Consulate of organizing armed raids on the Japanese military in Pogranichnaya; Japan's War Minister Hayashi charges the Soviet Union with provoking "border incidents" that must lead to "a grave situation"—while the press throughout the world publishes daily proof of the fact that the entire foreign policy of the Soviet Union is incontrovertibly anti-war.

WHY these precipitous war provocations by Japan against the Soviet Union? A glance at Japan's internal condition reveals an economic crisis which by this time has become acutely menacing—as menacing as the growing power of its Communist Party. But the **activities of Japanese** imperialists abroad offer further explanation of a war haste unusual even for governments frankly committed to provoking war. The Red Army of the Chinese Soviets, in its defense against outside forces attemping to prey on its territory, is now swiftly nearing the stronghold of the Nanking government, puppet of Japan. Japanese imperialists are desperately aware of the losing battle which their hireling, Chiang Kai-Shek, has been fighting despite all the money and military direction contributed in common by imperialists of America, Britain, and Japan. These employers of the anti-Soviet forces know quite well what General Victor Yakhontoff has remarked in his latest book: that "most if not all of China would turn Communist within a very short time" if the imperialist forces were withdrawn. They realize that a war against the Soviet Union offers their only immediate way out. Obviously, if Japan can engage the U. S. S. R. in open struggle it will be a relatively easy matter to enlist the most interested capitalist governments in a concerted crusade against "the menace of Communism," thus making China—and, they dare to hope, Soviet Russia—safe for limitless imperialist robbery. At least, so it would seem to them, provided, first, that the fundamental contradictions between the capitalist powers themselves can be resolved (which is ultimately impossible), and secondly, that the working-class which constitutes the overwhelming part of the world's

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armies permits itself to be stampeded into attacking its own fatherland.

IT would be naive to imagine that the imperialist war-makers are unaware of these two grave ifs; and yet the pitiless logic of their own economic position leaves them with no other alternative but war, even though, as has been repeatedly stated, capitalist countries are afraid to put arms into the hands of their workers for fear that foreign war may too easily be turned into civil war. But to workers in every country and to every sincere opponent of war the present actions of the Japanese government stand as the gravest threat to peace at the present moment throughout the world. Every possible effort against these war provocations must be mobilized by all elements of the working-class, by all allies of the working-class, and by every individual and group honestly opposed to war. Munition shipments to Japan must be stopped. Protests must flood the consulates of Japan the world over in a ringing denunciation and defiance of imperialism's plans to plunge the world headlong into new slaughter.

PROLETARIAN united front—supported by the allies from the middle-classes—is the order of the day. All those who do not see this, who try to obstruct this, are destined to be swept aside by the torrent of mass opposition to Fascism, to hunger, to war. When the news of the united front between the Socialists and Communists in France against the threat of Fascism and its concomitant, War, passed through the world there was great rejoicing. Thousands in concentration camps gave silent but fervid endorsement: millions in proletarian homes likewise. But to the bourgeois press, it was confusion and threat of chaos. Le Temps, that journal which Marx described as "the bourgeois turned into a newspaper," cried: "We will have to decide definitely and forever between the idealism of the French revolution and revolution pure and simple. Marxism on one side, anti-Marxism on the other." This same paper gloated over the February days when the Mobile Guard and the Paris police shot into workers' demonstrations, forever shattering the hollow slogan, "Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité." The French newspapers have been thundering on the right, hoping to frighten the rank and file of the Socialist Party out of the united front. They hopelessly misunderstood that it was this rank and file of the Socialist Party that caused the National Council of their party to vote for unity—to accept the Communist proffers for joint action. That unity is being cemented today with broadened united front actions. "Free Thaelmann [the Communist] in Fascist Germany: Free Seitz [the Socialist] in Fascist Austria" is the cry of millions of Communists and Socialists in France. They have cabled the American working-class impatiently inquiring why such a united front has not yet been established here.

ACROSS the English Channel there have been similar encouraging events. "The most important youth congress ever held" in the island has just agreed on a common program against Fascism, against War. Representatives from the Boy Scouts, from the Labor Party, the Labor Leagues of Youth, the Independent Labor Party, the Young Communist League—75 percent of the delegates under 25—worked side by side hammering out a common program. They passed an almost unanimous resolution condemning the recent pussy-footing declaration of the Labor Party on war. They clamor for straight-forward, decisive action. At home, we find again the vast pressure for united front. The historic conference of the American Youth Congress at New York University showed in what abhorrence Fascism is already held by many strata of our youth. A remarkable picture never before seen in the United States. Young Christians from the Y. M. C. A., young Socialists, young Communists—side by side against unemployment, war, Fascism. As Theodore Draper points out elsewhere in this issue, Viola Ilma, would-be American youth dictator, was swamped by the opposition which coalesced about the program of the Young Communist League and the Young Peoples Socialist League. We found Norman Thomas specifically endorsing the unity achieved at the Youth Congress and surprising the audience by stating that the unity achieved in France would be duplicated in America. He said the unity proposals of the Communist Party would be considered by his party on Labor Day week-end. Less than 24 hours afterward Earl Browder in the name of the Communist Party appealed for prompt action on Thomas' declaration for unity. He urged joint conferences of Socialist and Communist representatives to see to it that no possible "obstacles" can prevent the unity. History demands united front. Capitalism is maneuvering its own united front for war. Only most decisive joint action by workers and their allies can defeat the mass-murder plans on the capitalist calendar.

THE street fighting on August 21 in the Berlin suburbs between workers and Storm Troopers who came to "visit" those who had voted "Nein," is but the first bloody fruit of Hitler's August 19 plebiscite. For despite the marked ballots and unabashed intimidation and terror, which made the whole election a grand and bitter mockery, the prodigious increase of anti-Hitler votes has inspired unprecedented effort to stamp out the opposition. Hundreds of suspects (*i.e.,* Communists, Socialists, etc.) are being third-degreed by the Gestapo (Secret Police). More anti-Hitlerites are being packed into the torture camps. We may expect to read of scores murdered—victims of what the Nazis still refer to as suicide. Of the total votes cast — 38,362,760 for, 4,294,652 against, Hitler—nearly a million ballots were "spoiled"—*i.e.* marked with anti-Fascists slogans such as "Free Thaelmann!" The arrant boasting by Nazi leaders that they possess the names and addresses of all who voted "Nein" is now being followed up with a typically barbarous Nazi campaign to stamp out the opposition among Catholics, Socialists, Communists, etc. As the whole world knows, the chief attack is directed at the Communists who all along have constituted the only relentless and pitiless threat to Hitler's power. With the name of Ernst Thaelmann appearing everywhere in the Reich under such slogans as "Long Live the Communist Party of Germany" and "Save Thaelmann," the life of this heroic leader becomes more and more precarious. Wherefore it is all the more imperative that the campaign to save him be renewed with terrific vigor. The workers of the world by protests and demonstrations have literally kept this great Communist leader alive despite the certain death which the Nazis have prepared for him. In the face of this latest anti-Communist ferocity, the Free Thaelmann campaign must be carried on with greater force, for the anti-Fascist victory which the masses of the world can and must win.

DESPITE the desperate minimization campaign being carried on by the Roosevelt cabinet, the catastrophic proportions of the farm-and-food situa-

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tion, wrought jointly by the A.A.A. and God, becomes clearer with each passing day. Utterly ruined by the devastation of crop reduction and drought, millions of farmers are trying to grasp the cruel paradox of themselves facing famine this winter, after having been forced to destroy immense quantities of food by the government. Indicative of the havoc left in the wake of the drought is the news that not a bushel of wheat will be exported this year, whereas an average of 140 million bushels have been shipped out in previous years. Crops are burnt to a crisp; over a wide area the water shortage presents a pressing life-and-death problem for the stricken farmers. It is estimated that 15 million heads of cattle have been, or will be, slaughtered this summer, more than four times as many as the original A.A.A. program called for, and about 25 percent of the total number of cattle in the country. Nearly two-thirds of the 2,500,000 cattle in the Dakotas are being killed and processed; in Montana, half the herds have already been slaughtered without even troubling to process them. Tens of thousands are being buried on the spot. Hardly a basic crop has escaped the ravages of the A.A.A. and drought. While the agile Secretary of Agriculture assures us that "there will be enough food to go around next winter if we use common sense," a preliminary survey indicates a shortage of at least 4 percent in necessary foods this winter. The working-class has already begun to feel the effects of this devastation in the sky-rocketing of food prices, although the price-rise is not supposed to strike with full force until fall. Secretary Wallace has himself admitted that the general cost of living will rise at least 7-8 percent, in addition to the 7 percent rise since July, 1933. Conservative estimates place the rise in food prices alone at 15-20 percent. What an encouraging prospect for workers to contemplate, side by side with the latest report of the U. S. Department of Labor to the effect that payrolls fell 6.8 percent last month, while 359,000 factory workers were added to the unemployed ranks.

AND what of the poor farmer? Here are some significant figures: 2 million farm families are expected to be added to the relief rolls this winter as a direct result of the drought. More than 1,500 counties in the U. S. are on Federal drought relief already. Yet the President coolly announces that the half-billion dollars appropriated for drought relief by Congress last Spring, when the drought had not yet reached one-quarter of its present proportions, "will be quite sufficient to carry us through." The government's generosity toward the farmers is indicated by the appropriation for last month of $200,000 to cover 40,000 farm families on relief in Oklahoma—an average of $5 per family per month! Federal Reserve figures show that the cash income of farmers in the Northwest has dropped 27 percent already, with the worst to come this winter. Yes, sir, Uncle Sam is sure taking care of the farmer. But doesn't the rich and poor farmer suffer alike as a result of the crop reduction and drought? Not in the least. While the impoverished farmer was forced to sell his cattle to the government for $3-5 a head because he had no means of feeding them, the wealthy farmer was able to preserve his by purchasing or borrowing feed grains, and will reap the rewards of the high prices to come. The other day's news carried the significant items, side by side, that a poor farmer sold his pigs at $1.75 *a dozen*—not enough to cover the freightage—while one of the largest pig-breeders in Massachusetts was pocketing a $20,000 check handed to him by the government for taking a vacation from breeding this year. For the farmer, generally, as Secretary Wallace admits in an article written for the New York Times, the agricultural catastrophe comes as a double blow: "The farmers . . . are paying for the drought now, and will pay later in terms of manufactured goods."

HAS the present situation, with food shortage and even famine facing the country as an immediate possibility, made any change in the Administration's destructive program of crop reduction? Far from being concerned by this little matter of mass starvation, Wallace "fears" that increased production may result in another "surplus" in 1935, and announces his determination to keep the 50 million acres "retired" from production under the crop reduction program from being tilled even in the face of the threatening famine! "You can't expand a man's stomach," he says deceitfully, in defense of his plan, as if millions of humans were not hungering and starving for lack of the food he thus destroys, and as if the "surplus" he speaks of were not based on the purchasing power of the masses of people, rather than their needs as consumers. Merrily he trips down the Administration's destructive road, strewing absurdities and contradictions like Fall-dry leaves. In one of his recent speeches (August 19) aimed to break the force of the farmers' disillusionment with the A.A.A. program, he tells Midwestern farmers that the cotton reduction program was a

New Masses

VOL. XII, No. 9 AUGUST 28, 1934

CONTENTS

Editorial Comment 3
The Week's Papers 6
Who Hired the 'Frisco Cops 8
California's Terror Continues — Caroline Decker 9
America's Youth Rejects Fascism — Theodore Draper 11
A Million Workers Say Strike! — Carl Reeve 13
Robert Minor, the Man ..... Orrick Johns 16
Jews in the Soviet Union — Joshua Kunitz 19
Five Thousand Farms for Sale — Edward Newhouse 21
"Bombs in the Sky" ..... Harold Ward 24
Correspondence 25
Daniel Boone Belongs to Us — Michael Gold 26
Books 27
Germs of Frustration, by Granville Hicks; The Frightened Physicists, by Henry Hart; Can Jeffers Learn? by Herbert A. Klein.
Dictator for a Day ..... Robert Forsythe 29
Other New Films ..... I. L. 30
Between Ourselves 30
Drawings by B. Limbach, Crockett Johnson, Robert Minor.

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WILLIAM BROWDER, *Business Manager.*

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boon to them inasmuch as it removed potentially 4 million pounds of cottonseed oil from competition with lard raised from farm-belt hogs. Presumably, when his barn-storming tour takes him to the South, he will tell the cotton farmer what the A.A.A. did for his cottonseed oil by slaughtering one-third of the nation's pig-production! To a mind like Wallace's, Fascism offers the only escape from the contradictions which pile up before him, and in this light, his recent advocacy of a "National Economic Council"—the thinly-veiled prelude to an open Fascist dictatorship—becomes readily understandable.

ROBERT MINOR, one of the editors of the Liberator, predecessor of THE NEW MASSES, is fifty years old this week. The editors of THE NEW MASSES take this occasion to greet this veteran revolutionary. A banquet in his honor will be held in Webster Manor, Thursday evening, August 30. Professional revolutionaries will be present, rank and file workingmen, writers and artists who knew Robert Minor when he was the foremost cartoonist in America. All comrades of the revolution will gather to honor this outstanding leader of the American masses. Elsewhere in this issue an article by Orrick Johns explains in greater detail why Minor is known today to scores of thousands of workers; why he is revered by them. In his many years of working-class activity he has suffered the ordeals of the fearless revolutionary: arrests, beatings by the police, imprisonment, even the death sentence. This native of Texas is particularly well known to hundreds of thousands of Negroes in America. His tireless activity in the Scottsboro case and his work for Negro rights and self-determination of the Black Belt have endeared him to many thousands of Negro and white workingmen. The rich talents of Minor are diverse: he is outstanding not only as a professional revolutionary, as an organizer, as a leading political figure; he holds a pre-eminent place in the history of American revolutionary art. His cartoons will never be forgotten. He portrayed and helped mould the class struggle in America more dynamically than any of his predecessors or successors. The editors of THE NEW MASSES wish to add their voices to the tens of thousands who will hail Bob Minor on his fiftieth birthday. Regardless of the medium in which he carries on his revolutionary activity, he stands out as one of the principal figures in the annals of American revolutionary history.

The Week's Papers

WEDNESDAY, August 15—Roosevelt issues oral edict against food profiteering. . . . Navy Department finds bids for 12 new warships average $72,000,000 instead of estimated $50,000,000. . . . General Johnson says he's ready to quit N.R.A. command. . . . Wholesale food prices reach new three-year peak, according to Dun and Bradstreet's report. . . . Mayor LaGuardia promises probe of knitgoods strikers' charge of police clubbings and kickings. . . . A. F. of L. leaders plan to ask C.W.A. revival to replace direct relief next winter. . . . LaGuardia predicts complete collapse of State and municipal relief next Spring unless Congress passes full social legislation program. . . . Few papers print statement by Federal Relief Administrator Harry L. Hopkins in Paris that "the Roosevelt administration is making an honest and sincere attempt to bolster up capitalism." . . . Pacific Coast terror resumed as Vigilantes attack San Francisco workers' meeting; jury convicts Elaine Black, International Labor Defense organizer, of "vagrancy."

Thursday—National Steel Labor Relations Board rules employers have no legal interest in form of bargaining organization workers set up. . . . Normal surplusses of virtually all staple farm products admitted wiped out by drought and curtailment program. . . . United Textile Workers' Union convention orders general strike in industry before Sept. 1. . . . Police again brutally assault knitgoods strikers' pickets. . . . Chicago busmen strike. . . . Labor Relations Board orders Minneapolis truckmen to vote on which union they choose to represent them in the strike. . . . Newspaper Guild pickets Staten Island (N. Y.) Advance for firing man for joining Guild. . . . A "shift in diet"—meaning eating less and substitutes at that—is urged by Secretary Wallace because of feared shortage of food. . . . Upton Sinclair's campaign-paper End Poverty displays a headline: "Strike Breakers Favor Upton Sinclair." . . . Visa asked in Washington for Mme. Sun Yat Sen to attend second United States Congress Against War in Chicago. . . . Carl von Ossietzky, former German editor, is publicly recommended for Nobel Peace prize. Ossietzky is in a Nazi concentration camp.

Friday—Reign of terror continues against onion field workers on strike for higher wages in Hardin County, O. . . . Drought causes United States to withdraw from world wheat markets. . . . To "assist drought-stricken farmers" Government permits milk price increases in seven Western cities. . . . Knitgoods workers start settlements. . . . U. S. will increase its mattress manufacturing units from 410 now running to 643. . . . Mayor LaGuardia issues order to police to permit mass picketing. . . . July factory employment dropped 3 percent, payrolls 6.8 percent in June, one of largest July drops since 1919. . . . Silk, rayon and woolen unions vote to join general textile strike of 500,000, bringing prospective total of strikers to 850,000. . . . Sacramento district attorney "accuses" James Cagney of aiding Communist Party with contributions. . . . Seventeen workers indicted in Sacramento on criminal syndicalism charges. K. K. K. declares war on Senator Huey Long.

Saturday—Steel industry discusses dropping steel code if labor board's collective bargaining rulings are enforced. . . . Official estimate asserts cash farm income, despite drought and curtailment, exceeds that of 1933 by a billion dollars, aggregating $5,450,000,000. . . . Green announces A. F. of L. drive to oust Communists and militant rank and file from organization. . . . Senator Long, made "Hitler of Louisiana" by dictatorial legislation he forced through, prepares to use his powers against political enemies. . . . Sympathetic strike of all transport workers urged in support of Chicago bus strikers.

Sunday—House Speaker Henry T. Rainey dies in St. Louis. . . . Foreign Policy Association finds a world eco-

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nomic upswing under way. . . . Senator Long plans to "lead an American revolution," Mayor Walmsley, New Orleans, Long's political foe, declares. . . . Al Capone and other Federal prisoners in first batch to be transported to Alcatraz prison, the American "Devil's Island." . . . Secretary Wallace urges National Economic Council to coordinate N.R.A. and A.A.A. . . . District Attorney Neil McAllister, Sacramento, proposes to ask injunction forbidding anyone from contributing support to Communist Party or sympathizing with radical organizations. McAllister proposes to question Lupe Velez, Ramon Novarro and others on whether they contributed to C. P.

Monday—Roosevelt discusses reshaping N.R.A. . . . Livestock feed and forage ordered admitted duty-free in attempt to aid drought victims. . . . Canada proposes embargo on exportation of livestock feed and forage. . . . R.F.C. urges banks, in interest of stimulating recovery, to make direct industrial loans under R.F.C. guarantee. . . . Acting Gov. Merriam, California, gets application for pardon for Tom Mooney. . . . Wheeling Steel Corporation, at Portsmouth, O., hearing before Steel Labor Board, attacks legality of recovery act in effort to maintain open shop. . . . Georgia Supreme Court agrees to permit filing of motion for rehearing in Angelo Herndon case. . . . Vigilantes kill one, wound another, longshoreman in Portland, Ore. . . . National Guard is withdrawn from Kohler, and county deputies, who killed two pickets, resume task of trying to break strike. . . . Deputy sheriffs attack striking relief workers in Milwaukee with tear gas bombs and clubs when strikers begin picketing non-struck relief projects.

Tuesday—National Labor Relations Board orders John L. Donovan, N.R.A. employe fired by Gen. Johnson for union activities, reinstated. . . . Government decides to lend farmers 12 cents a pound on cotton. . . . Agreement ends five weeks' truckmen's strike in Minneapolis. . . . Food prices on July 31 reached 30 months' high; increased 22 percent since April, 1933, Bureau of Labor Statistics report. . . . Arthur Brisbane regales readers by quoting William Randolph Hearst to the effect war is unthinkable in Europe at present because its end would mean "Communism or something worse than Communism." . . . Dozen bandits escape with $427,000 cash after daylight holdup of undermanned armored truck in Brooklyn, whose guards were recently reduced from 5 to 3. Their pay is reported as $20 a week.

The State of the Nation

Philadelphia, Aug. 16.—Hundreds of hunger-crazed squatters on a city dump braved blazing gasoline and a United States Marshal's pistol to fish 1,000-gallon cans of poisoned prunes from a flaming pyre.

"Who cares? It's something to eat," one man shouted in reply to the warning that the food was tainted.

Ignoring the pistol and the blazing gasoline poured over the pile of cans, they tried to fish the fruit from the flames with long poles. Some succeeded. Violent gastric disorders were predicted for them.—*Associated Press Dispatch.*

"Aw, be a sport. Tell the newsreel audience you still have faith in the Lawd and good old Franklin D." *Crockett Johnson*

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STRIKE VIOLENCE MEMO

REPORT # 301 DATE: July 17, 1934

ATTN: Mg. Dir. Boynton_____ File:_____

ARRESTS: In connection with Police raids on Radical Meeting places today. Arrests by Lieut. Malloy and Posse. Bail set at $20 in each case.

GEORGE CHAMORRO .....32, 17 Stillman St.

VICTOR BOLANOS.....42, 334 Chestnut St.

LAWRENCE VARELLA.....[illegible] 383 9th St.

Who Hired the Frisco Cops?

THE facsimile reproduced above is part of a document—a carbon copy—found in a San Francisco court room. The court room, at the time, was crowded with workers on trial, workers beaten and arrested during those raids on Communists by which the employers of San Francisco, acting together with the Federal government, the press, the police and the state power, and later powerfully aided by President Green of the A. F. of L., made their first concerted effort to break the general strike.

This "Report No. 301" lists 94 names of those arrested. There is another similar document, "Report No. 306" which lists 78 names. The "Mg. Dir. Boynton" to whose attention both reports are addressed is Albert Boynton, managing director of the Industrial Association. The signature (typed) is "P. Carr."

We have these documents from the Nation, which made them available to the weekly and daily press after conducting an investigation to establish their genuineness. "P. Carr" is a private detective working closely with the San Francisco police for the Industrial Association. The names he listed in these raids—*"by Lieut. Malloy and posse"*—appear, almost all of them, on the police station blotters. There can scarcely be a doubt that these documents are genuine, and that we have here first-hand evidence of the organic tieup between the Industrial Association and the police. The reports about the raids broadcast by the employer-controlled press and news services tried hard to make it appear that the raids of destruction were made by "indignant citizens," with the police following up. "P. Carr's" testimony is that the raids were by "Lieut. Malloy and posse," and by "Capt. Hoertkorn and posse." The Industrial Association ordered the raids, sent its observer along, and got instant reports on the results. The Fascist character of this procedure was obvious from the start. We have pointed it out time after time, and we note that this fact is now beginning to sink in even on the liberal press.

Fascism is the issue, in San Francisco, in Sacramento, the Imperial Valley; in Minneapolis, Huntsville, Alabama, the truck garden baronies of New Jersey. Capitalism has perfected its technique, and the lessons taught by Hitler have been well-learned. Wherever labor struggles for a living wage, for its fundamental rights to organize, there you hear the cry of "Reds!" the hunting call to the Fascist packs. Now that the mask of liberalism is stripped from Roosevelt's N.R.A. program we find a fundamental endorsement of force—every ounce of force that the capitalist state can employ—and then more force, by gangs of employers and hired thugs. This is the answer that capitalism in America, its back to the wall, and the wall crumbling, throws to the rising labor movement.

Fascism is the issue. Liberals need be under no illusions as to where they would land under a Fascist regime here. This is a different world from 1920, when the post-war anti-Red raids were anti-Red raids and ran their course and subsided. This is 1934. The totalitarian state and nothing less is capitalism's final objective. First the attack on the Communist Party and its affiliated organizations; then on all unions, then on all cultural movements, organizations, tendencies. Labor, in factory and on the farms, is fighting in the front-line trenches now; it doesn't need secret documents to prove to it that it is engaged in a battle for its very existence. The forces behind the battle line must sooner or later be welded together. Professionals, white collar workers, intellectuals—their stake in the war against Fascism is as great, their danger is fully as imminent. The appeal for a united front against Fascism is more than a program now; it is a matter of life or death.

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California's Terror Continues

CAROLINE DECKER

Caroline Decker is an organizer for the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union. In connection with the raids and arrests she describes below, the prosecutor has recently launched a high-powered campaign against moving picture celebrities on the ground that they have aided the workers' struggles in California. Miss Decker's story was written before these red-scare frame-up maneuvers of the prosecution, intended to prejudice prospective jurors and insure conviction of herself and the other defendants, were begun.—THE EDITORS.

SACRAMENTO CITY JAIL, August 10.

THIS is the agricultural background of the terror that has resulted in my sojourn here, along with twenty-three others, charged with vagrancy and criminal syndicalism and soon to be tried.

On May 7, in Fresno, California, Chamber of Commerce Building, a meeting of "fresh fruit" growers was held "to set a wage scale." L. W. Frick, wealthy cotton grower of San Joaquin Valley, presided. Only twenty were present. My facts come from an authentic report of the meeting, never made public for obvious reasons.

The temper of the meeting is best expressed by the following remarks:

Mr. Merritt, manager of the famous Tagus ranch and victim of a victorious strike last year, led by the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union: "We had a long talk with the men through the company union the other day, and they don't expect more than 20 cents an hour. But even if you raise it to 25 cents, the red union will make you raise it to 30 cents."

A Contra Costa County grower: "I paid 15 cents (an hour) up to August 1 and then I voluntarily hoisted it to 17½ cents. That was the morning they pulled the first strike on us. In an hour I didn't have a man left in the field."

E. K. Walls, rich cotton grower of Tulare County, explained the work of the Labor Relations Department of the Tulare County Farm Bureau, as "definitely set up with the idea of keeping control of labor matters within the Farm Bureau itself." He said, "We don't want any fact-finding tables made up by college professors and priests!" (Mr. Walls referred to the "fact-finding" committee set up during last year's cotton strike, after three workers were murdered by vigilantes, which found that the pickers ought to get 75 cents a 100 pounds instead of the original 60 cents, but *not* the $1 demanded.)

Edson Abel, attorney for the finance companies, admitted in the Pacific Rural Press, mouthpiece of the big growers and cotton finance companies, that the personnel of the "fact-finding" committee was submitted to the growers before being publicly announced. However, these growers will never become reconciled to the fact that, although Archbishop Hanna and Prof. Tully Knowles of the College of the Pacific accepted the commission, the third member of the "approved" committee was unable to serve, and Prof. Ira B. Cross, known to be a "liberal," was substituted. Since that time Archbishop Hanna has proved himself worthy, in the eyes of the owning class, to hold such commissions. (San Francisco longshoremen's strike.)

"If you pay 20 cents or 22½, you'll just be digging under the scab of the old sore," Mr. Walls continued. (How well he remembered the cotton strike!) "It's all right to fix a low scale if you know you can keep to it, but if you're going to have to give in like a yellow dog in the middle of the season and raise it, that's just a victory for the reds."

But the high point of the meeting developed when S. Parker Frisselle, red-baiter, vigilante, and manager of one of the state's largest corporation ranches, declared the purpose of the newly-organized Associated Farmers "to fight the Cannery & Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union." He urged employment of "as good lawyers as we've got to fight the cases in court. Every case they win is just water on the wheel," he said, referring to the hundreds of acquittals of arrested strikers and union leaders won in this state by the International Labor Defense attorneys.

"Public opinion," said Frisselle, "is the biggest enemy and the biggest weapon. The farmer hasn't got the money to do it. He'll have to get it largely from the industries—bankers, shippers, oil companies—who will be greatly hit if this thing (red organization) succeeds."

He named the California Farm Bureau, the State Board of Agriculture, the Chamber of Commerce as being "back of the campaign." Colbert Caldwell (reported member of the State Board of Industrial Relations), Earl Fisher of the Pacific Gas & Electric Co., and Leonard Wood of the California Packing Corporation, were named on the committee to collect funds for the fascist campaign. Frisselle assured the group that the bankers, shippers, and oil companies would only help to organize and then drop out.

"It will carry a lot more weight," he said, "if it is just a grower-packer thing and not tied to anybody's kite."

When the agricultural season opened in full swing, the prevailing wage was 20 cents an hour. That the "campaign funds" were successfully spent was obvious from the announcement of hundreds of new deputies, new supplies of vomit gas and guns for each county, and from newspaper editorials sounding the alarm that "red rodents are infesting the orchards and vineyards and should be drowned and eliminated in the manner accorded rodents" (Wheatland daily newspaper).

Nor was it kept secret that the Associated Farmers sent a committee to Paul Scharrenberg of the American Federation of Labor asking them to organize the agricultural workers. They did! The C. & A. W. I. U. organizers of the Brentwood apricot strike were thrown into jail, the A. F. of L. stepped outside of its drive to collect $5 each for membership from the workers, the A. F. of L. succeeded, as a result of the strike, in cutting wages from 20 cents to 15 cents an hour on Balfour Guthrie, large English-controlled apricot corporation. The workers were sold out by this leadership. They didn't like it. The bulk of the crop was yet to come.

The district office of the C. & A. W. I. U. was quartered in the building of the Sacramento Workers' School. San Francisco, on July 19, had shown the way. It had sent "hoodlums," closely followed by police, to smash up the Workers' School and every "red" center. While they were about it, they might as well "clean up" Sacramento, wreck the school and the headquarters of the Communist party too.

This is how it happened:

July 20.—11:45 a.m., at the Workers' Center. Some were in committee meetings, some were playing handball in the large hall, some were reading at the tables. We knew what it was as soon as we heard the stampede up the stairway. I counted seventeen plainclothes men, thirteen uniformed police, and scores more surrounded the building and the entrance. They had an arsenal—sawed-off shotguns, handcuffs, blackjacks, rubber-hose, billies, riot clubs, gas bombs, Sacramento Bee photographer and reporter, all the necessary equipage.

All rooms were quickly cleaned out, and the comrades lined up against the wall—there were about eighteen of us. I remained seated. While the sawed-off shotguns were trained on us, a squad carefully searched each one. Such dangerous weapons as a union membership book, the Daily Worker and Western Worker were found on us.

"What's your name?" bawled a cop to my right at a small group that had been routed out of the office. "Albert Hougardy," was the reply. "Hey, chief," shouts the cop with a grin, "this is Hougardy!" The chief smiles and nods approval. Hougardy is the Sacramento section organizer of the Communist Party and Communist candidate for U. S. Congressman. His Democratic opponent is Frank H. Buck, owner and operator of a large

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ranch in Vacaville on which occurred one of the first strikes of the then newly-organized C. & A. W. I. U. Five young workers were kidnapped, beaten and tarred and feathered during that strike.

"What's your name?" shouts the cop again. "Pat Chambers." The cop could no longer contain himself. "Chief!" he screeches, "this is Chambers!"

Soon it was my turn. "And what is your name, Miss?" "Miss Decker." "The first name?" "Caroline." That was too much, the cop almost swooned. He tiptoed up to the chief, they whispered excitedly. You could almost imagine saliva dripping from their mouths and blood from their hands.

The men were piled into patrol wagons.

I was kept waiting while "evidence" was gathered. The bookshop was cleaned out. Dozens of demonstration placards were pulled from shelves and piled up, desks and drawers were torn open, every crack searched; sneering, stupid remarks were made about a fine picture of Comrade Lenin that hung on the wall, and it was taken down—for evidence! A barber had been permitted to advertise his shop on a little placard on the wall. "Let's get that s-b!" said a cop. The typewriters were stacked up, ready to go. I've since heard they were smashed.

I rode down in Chief of Police Hallanan's car. (This was not a usual raid—the Chief supervised it.) As we got out of the car another cop came running up, his eyes fairly rolling in delight. "Chief!" he cried proudly, "I got Wilson and a whole slew of 'em in Hooverville!" "Yeah?" said the chief, sourly indicating me as "one of 'em." "Yeah!" said the cop. "We're going back and clean up the place."

Now that cop had indeed earned a promotion. For Martin Wilson is the local representative of the I.L.D., and although not an attorney, and although regularly threatened with contempt of court by the judge, he has won acquittals and hung juries for many workers on trials before the police court, to the annoyance of City Prosecutor Knowles.

Lorine Norman, the only other woman comrade arrested, tells me the story of the raid on the Workers' School. Lorine picked cotton at the age of seven in Texas, worked for three years at the State Library in Sacramento, and was formerly secretary of the Socialist Party Northern California Valley Conference.

Lorine said: "Collins and I were sitting in the library discussing a newspaper announcement that a vigilante committee had been organized here. I was looking out of the window when some cars drove up and stopped. A batch of cops—there were ten or more—flew up the stairs, came in and grabbed us. One yelled out, 'You hold them, we'll get the rest!' They went through the house and came back disappointed—there wasn't anybody else. As we were shoved into the car a cop yelled out—'Take 'em to the station, the charge is vag.' I used to say—they can't do that!"

I was brought upstairs into the city jail. Judge Carraghar had moved his court up there to greet us. He and Chief Hallanan were discussing the charges and bail—buzz-buzz—"C.S. and Vag—C.S.—$1,000, $2,000, $3,000."

The matron searched me from my head to between my toes. Was she looking for some of the "red" dynamite Sheriff Don Cox "discovered" under a bridge?

July 21.—Hearing in police court before Judge Carraghar. Each of us went through the book carefully—"Not guilty"—(jury trial)—"Dismissal on grounds of lack of evidence; denied"—"Release on our own recognizance—denied." "What is the bail?" "Two hundred and fifty vag, a thousand on C.S.," said Carraghar, "I'll let you know for sure tomorrow."

Who set that bail? It's supposed to be the judge.

Workers come to court for the hearing. Six are arrested. The number swells to 29, charged with vagrancy.

July 22.—Hearing to set trial date. August 6 for the first ones, August 13 for the last six! "What's the bail, judge?" "$1,000 cash or $2,000 property on vag., $2,000 cash or property on C.S."

"Are we charged with criminal syndicalism?" "No, you're booked on suspicion of criminal syndicalism."

"But that's exorbitant bail for a charge of vagrancy!"

"You're high-class vagrants!" answers the judge.

Motions for dismissal for release on own recognizance, for reduction of bail, begin. "All motions denied," says Carraghar. "Court's adjourned."

"But we have something to say!"

"Well, let's talk informally then," says the judge. Motions for reduction of bail continue.

"But the court is not in session," says the judge, "so I cannot hear any motions."

"Then reconvene the court!"

"No, that's all for today."

July 24.—Hearing to consolidate the trials, both to be August 6. Motions for bail reduction begin again. "Don't make any more motions," says Carraghar. "They are denied. Court's adjourned."

On one of the days between July 24 and 30 we were called out individually, not told where we were going, shoved into a room with six burly men. Several were there from the District Attorney's office, also the Federal immigration officer, a male stenographer and several burlies for appearance.

Star Chamber proceedings! Evidence for criminal syndicalism. How disappointing—cajoling, threats, promises would not make us answer their supposedly sly but actually stupid questions. They can find only two who are not native born and a good half-dozen crop up with "honorable" discharges.

On another day Lorine is offered six months parole if she will plead guilty and promise to stay away from the movement. Lorine is trying to catch the light now on a magazine—between the bars.

July 30.—Attorney Leo Gallagher brings a writ before the superior court for lowering bail. He makes a brilliant speech exposing fascism in California. He says, "If there were 200,000 Communists in California before these raids, there are 300,000 now!" Defendants burst into applause. "Silence!" thunders the court.

"You know," says Attorney Gallagher, turning to District Attorney McAllister, "that if these people promised to take a floater out of town, you'd dismiss the case."

McAllister, his face reddening, bangs on the table and shouts, "I wouldn't dismiss this case if these people promised to go to hell!"

The superior court judge said that motion for reduction of bail would have to be made and denied in the lower court before it could come to him. We said we had made it! McAllister said we had not. The clerk of the lower court was called in to read the motions. Not a word appeared in his notes about reduction of bail!

Meanwhile the homes of sympathizers, business people and laborers, are raided. Telephones are tapped and threats made by the police to "break every piece of furniture in your house." Bondsmen are threatened and terrorized.

On the evening of the 30th, property bail for five charged with vagrancy is brought in. The "suspicion for criminal syndicalism" has overrun its proper length of time for making definite charges. We are released from our cells, prepared to go. The sergeant calls the District Attorney. "Shall I let them go?" "No, hold them!"

July 31.—Hearing in lower court for bail reduction. Denied.

That afternoon Cop Kuntz walks majestically into our cells. "Is your true name So and So?" He reads a phoney warrant with a long list of names containing those who taught at the Workers' School. "You are hereby arrested for the crime of Criminal Syndicalism! Bail $3,000!"

Present status of the Workers' School, curriculum and staff, as a result of the terror:

Principles of Communisim—Teacher, Jack Crane (in jail).

Communist Organization—Albert Hougardy (in jail).

Marxian Economics and Journalism—Norman Mini (in jail).

Problems of Young Workers—Lincoln Grametz (warrant out for arrest).

History of American Working Class—Nora Conklin (now serving 90 days in Sacramento County Jail for leading unemployed demonstration on relief office).

Workers' Self-defense in Court—Martin Wilson (in jail).

Workers' English—Helen Joyce (warrant out for arrest).

Workers' Theater—June Ferris (warrant out for arrest).

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Public Speaking — Jack Warnick (in jail).

Trade Unionism—Caroline Decker (in jail).

August 2.—Writ in superior court to lower bail. Denied.

August 4.—Taken from bed in pajamas and paraded on "show-up" before Red Squad and "witnesses" for the people.

August 5. — Paraded before "peek-a-boo," a square, tent-like enclosure with small holes in it, in which "witnesses" are placed so as to closely scrutinize the victim without being seen themselves.

August 6.—First day of trial, choosing a jury. Jury panel exhausted. 200 more called in—*by cops.* Adjourned until August 8.

August 7.—Second "show-up." "Witnesses" become better acquainted so as to be able to "swear to tell the truth and nothing but the truth" and to smoothly identify us as having "roamed about from place to place without any lawful business."

August 8.—Resumption of trial. Mr. Frisselle advised that they "employ the best attorneys to fight the cases." Clifford Russell, best known criminal attorney in Sacramento, is retained by the City Council of Sacramento at a fee of $500 (publicly) to "fight the case."

All the court clerks and bulls and cops are dashing around madly to bring in the "proper" kind of jurors and to get the dope on the few they don't know. Russell doesn't have to "object" much now, the judge is taking care of it for him. Anyone who looks like a worker is excused from the jury by the prosecution.

Five of us are conducting self-defense, the fifth conducting defense for all the others. We are not permitted direct examination of the jurors but forced to ask questions through the judge.

"Are you aware that the Communist Party is a legal political party?"

Judge Carraghar—"Question denied."

"Are you aware that the Cannery and Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union is a legal labor organization?"

"Question denied."

"Do you believe in that part of the Constitution which guarantees the right of freedom of—"

"Question denied."

"Do you believe in the rights of workers to organize into the union of their own choice?"

"Question denied. All questions of that type will be denied. Neither Communism nor labor is on trial here."

No. Just high-class vagrants!

America's Youth Rejects Fascism

THEODORE DRAPER

THERE is one inescapable issue in America today—Fascism. At the First American Youth Conference, just held in New York, Fascism was the major issue, and it divided the delegates from the beginning. At this conference of the representatives of more than 1,700,000 American youth, the delegates were led right up to the waters of fascism—and they refused to drink.

It was the broadest united front conference ever held in America. American youth, from the Young Communist League to the Boy Scouts of America, were represented. About four hundred delegates were present, two hundred from organizations and fully half from National youth organizations. This remarkably diverse group assembled to discuss everything from war to "spiritual renaissance."

Background. — Preparations for the Congress were undertaken three months ago by an organization styling itself the Central Bureau for Young America. Actually, the name was a circumlocution for a young lady named Viola Ilma. Her aspirations date from the summer of last year, when she had the opportunity of meeting Baldur von Shirach, the Nazi youth fuehrer, Bertrand de Jouvenel, the youthful French fascist, and young de Rivera,the former Spanish dictator's son. Their visions of power captivated her.

She could already boast of not inconsiderable achievements for a girl said to be no more than twenty-three. A year and a half ago she took it into her head to send out notices to the literary columns announcing a new magazine, Modern Youth. There was no such magazine, but there was an idea that no contributor was to exceed the age of thirty. Apparently what she hoped to get was little more than ephemeral publicity. She had no financial backing and no experience. To hear her tell it, the innocent notices about Modern Youth were answered with an avalanche of inquiries, subscriptions and contributions. Everybody had taken her seriously. Finally she induced a small printer near Chicago to extend credit for three issues. Back in New York she hired Louis Kronenberger to do the actual editing. When it ran up a debt of $11,000, that was the end of Modern Youth. Viola Ilma was down but not out.

About this time Miss Ilma became a sort of protégé of Anne Morgan. In July, 1933, she attended a convention of the American Woman's Association, of which Miss Morgan is president. That convention sent her to Geneva as its representative to the International Congress of Women held that summer. Ilma was thus enabled to roam Europe and meet the inspiring fascist gentlemen. Returning home, she hastily sketched her impressions even while yet on board ship. She says that new ideas, new visions "poured in on her." She issued a book some months ago under the ecstatic cry, *And Now — Youth!* It is a melange of Fascism and fantasy, and although ghosted, it fairly represents what is in her head.

Her impressions of Germany are especially significant. In the book, and recently in her conversation and speeches, she has been satisfied to say that what impressed her about "Hitler's new Germany" was its magnificent "discipline, drive and organization." Certainly she is no fascist; no indeed. But when fresh from Europe she was much less timid and said:

> Then I went to Germany for ten days and saw something quite different. It was a thrilling experience to see youth with something to live for. Hitler, whatever else may be said about him, has given them self-respect, courage and a new vitality. (N. Y. Times, Dec. 10, 1933.)

Well, little else need be said if you could say that.

It is said on good authority that Miss Ilma has a vision of a million anonymous youth, all standing erect in one great field, hands aloft, shouting, "Heil Ilma!" It is not impossible. This is the young lady behind the First American Youth Congress.

Preparations.—Ilma's first step was to set up the Central Bureau for Young America. It sounded fancy and was intended "to assist and foster sound intellectual, spiritual and physical development of the youth of America." Anne Morgan gave her money. So did Mrs. August Belmont, some Wall Street brokers and men about town. Ilma has a genius for wheedling "contributions" out of rich dowagers. Arthur Garfield Hays chipped in too. She let him make a speech in return for that at the Congress.

The future of the Central Bureau thus became the future of Viola Ilma. She boasts that "the president, secretary, treasurer and office boy was Viola Ilma." In a world already full to bursting, positions of importance and prestige had long been preempted by scores of other Viola Ilmas. The First American Youth Congress was needed as the coming out party of the Central Bureau. It was to introduce little Viola as "America's Leader of Youth." Youth must always be capitalized.

Miss Ilma procured space for the Congress at Washington Square College, New York University, by interesting Professor Harvey Zorbaugh of the sociology department. Their aim was to garner everything in sight under

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thirty. A Congress committee was set up with Viola Ilma as chairman. The Central Bureau took on added forces, some from her immediate family, and its mailing assumed really gigantic proportions. Miss Ilma got lots of New Deal figures to join her advisory board and thus gave the Congress a tone of official acceptance. She was a von Shirach without a Hitler.

One might suspect from all this that Miss Ilma is a remarkable young person. Far from it. She is energetic and pleasantly dramatic and, above all, gives the perfect illusion of being the very personification of Youth, especially, one gathers, to maids like Anne Morgan. Were it not that she became the instrument of larger forces, she might have remained a little girl with big, dangerous ideas.

Issues.—Back of the Central Bureau, directly and indirectly, looms the Roosevelt administration. Ilma chose as programmatic keynotes, as the basis for her own united front in the forthcoming Congress, points significantly common to both the Roosevelt and Hitler "new deals." In every bit of literature issued to prospective delegates and in her conversations at her New York office, you got to learn that the hope of American youth lay in transient camps, subsistence homesteads and an apprenticeship system. All are part of the New Deal and integral to Fascism. The project for subsistence homesteads is an attempt to use the crisis-created misery of millions of youth (and older workers too) in order to freeze them into a servile standard of living. It means the evasion of more direct and substantial aid like unemployment insurance. This goes for transient camps too, with the added implication of militarizing the youth. The apprenticeship scheme needs only Hitler's terminology to be identical with the system of industrial "leaders" (employers) and "followers" (workers). Her emphasis on these can be seen from the five roundtable conferences planned for the delegates at the Congress. The sesson on transient camps ranks first, the session on homesteads and apprenticeships ranks second. By adopting precisely those portions of the Roosevelt program which are most plainly fascist, Ilma was able to tie her kite to Roosevelt and Hitler, both at once.

The proof of the pudding is in this: that the chairman of the transient session was William J. Plunkert, head of the F.E.R.A. division of transients, and the chairman of the second session was to be John J. Sidel, of the N.R.A. apprenticeship division. Both came hot from Washington for the Congress.

Miss Ilma has always and insistently emphasized Youth as some sort of abstract unity. One would think after a reading of *And Now — Youth!* that every living soul under thirty is of the Lord's anointed. The highest praise she has found for Roosevelt, whom she has consistently supported since her return from Europe, is to call him "the first young man's President." The purpose of such tripe about Youth and its mission is to obscure the class divisions in Society. For a class analysis of every burning problem, she substitutes an age analysis. This is not to deny that there are special problems of youth, but they are only special exemplifications of the general problems of the workers everywhere. The problem of the transient youth, for example, is essentially the problem of unemployment and that problem extends beyond thirty.

There is one more item in which the Central Bureau was intensely interested and that was a "census of Youth." There is no question that Ilma had reason to believe that it would be financed by Washington, using the Central Bureau as its agency. Before Viola Ilma became a "Leader of Youth," she would become an "Authority on Youth." It is pretty clear that in return for whatever support Miss Ilma could appear to have swung for the Roosevelt youth program, the lucrative "census of youth" was to be her reward.

Rumblings.—Just when the Central Bureau was getting down to business, opposition turned up. Professor Zorbaugh broke with her when he discovered that liberal and radical organizations were being held down to a minimum. Not only that, but she had provided for about two hundred "unaffiliated" delegates. They represented nobody but themselves and were hand-picked. Two weeks before the Congress, Prof. Zorbaugh invited twelve organizations for a conference. It is useful to indicate how broad the opposition united front was, right from the beginning, by enumerating the organizations present: Avukah, League for Industrial Democracy, National Pioneer Council, National Student Federation, National Student League, New America, Pioneer Youth, War Resisters League, Young Communist League, Y.M.C.A. (Student Division National Council), Young People's Socialist League and the Y.W.C.A. (National Student Council).

The caucus was meeting to fight off a very important bid for Fascism. Miss Ilma had taken over not only a fascist program, but also a very obvious fascist procedure. From all appearances it appeared that the Congress had been framed before it had begun. Fuehrer's do not bother to get the will of their subjects. The organizations drafted an open letter to the Central Bureau demanding a democratically elected executive, resolutions and credentials committees, and a revision of the agenda.

No answer was ever received. When Miss Ilma ignored them, the organizations met again and undertook further action. The united front was holding together solidly. A committee of five was appointed to draft a united front resolution.

Another opposition caucus was held on the very eve of the Congress. About eighty delegates were present. The opposition had grown to twenty-eight organizations. The program of the Congress had been issued that very day and the worst fears of the opposition were realized. The rules were complicated and clumsy, but they unmistakably prevented any decisions by the assembly itself. Voting power upon all questions was vested in an Executive Board and that Board was top-heavy with Central Bureau people. The Congress at large decided nothing. The Executive Board made all decisions in private session.

No provision had even been made for the election of a chairman. The fight on that point was to be the opening gun.

The First Day.—The morning session opened with a slate of "distinguished" speakers, Mayor La Guardia, Governor Winant of New Hampshire, the New Deal in the person of A. A. Berle. The Congress had opened very suddenly and informally; no chairman. As soon as the speeches had ended, Miss Ilma advanced to make announcements. She had just begun when Waldo McNutt of the Rocky Mountain Council of the Y.M.C.A. called out for the election of a chairman; called out from the floor. Miss Ilma became very disconcerted, but proceeded as evenly as possible. From all sides of the auditorium a cry for chairman started under way. Miss Ilma lost her head, looked alternately fierce and frantic, and retired in favor of one of her henchmen. The chair was shifted from one person to the other. The scene was fairly ludicrous. The tide could not be stemmed. Debate started on the floor, one person denouncing the rowdy Communists, the next calling for the right of an assembly to elect its own officers and make its own rules. Miss Ilma finally took the chair again, and when an anonymous friend of hers shouted at her to adjourn the session, she abruptly did so in a voice weak from anxiety and despair.

The afternoon session was devoted to the round-table conferences. The same issue was immediately raised in every session by challenging Miss Ilma's hand-picked chairmen. In four sessions her choice was ousted, even Plunkert, and chairmen elected from the floor. The opposition to the Ilma dictatorship now embraced the overwhelming majority of delegates. The real showdown was still to come in the evening when the Executive Board was to have its first meeting. Yes, the same strategy.

About a hundred people were admitted to the Executive Board. The session was supposed to be concerned with a symposium on various political tendencies, but it never got that far. The moment Miss Ilma took the chair, the cry began for a chairman. She simply ignored them. Above the confusion rose the strident objections of Gil Green, a leader of the opposition representing the Young Communist League. Ilma again appeared to be at a total loss. A moment later she retired. Her successor, Prof. J. B. Nash of the University, had his own difficulties. He held out for nearly an hour and then weakened. He permitted nominations and McNutt was pitted against Miss Ilma. She declined.

It was at this point that the Congress split. Miss Ilma and about twenty-five faithfuls left the room. The Executive Board continued in a strange new atmosphere of sweetness and light. Miss Ilma had gone straightway to the Hotel Brevoort, five blocks away, for her own little, private little Congress.

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Two Days. — Next morning, about two hundred people gathered before the auditorium, but the doors were closed. Rain was beginning to fall. It was later discovered that Miss Ilma had ordered the doors closed. After tense and highly impatient waiting, a room was finally procured by the local chapter of the National Student League. After this, two meetings were going on, the Congress in the University and the Ilma group at the Hotel Brevoort. The morning of the Congress was devoted to organizing itself. Every few minutes word would be brought of the rump session. A delegation of six was sent over to negotiate. They were refused a hearing. Professor Nash turned up with an appeal from the Chancellor. He wanted to speak to a small committee, perhaps the difficulties could be resolved. As the committee walked into the Chancellor's room Miss Ilma walked out. What the Chancellor wanted was another attempt at mediation, and he got it. Miss Ilma would not compromise with the new committee. From then on both groups officially ignored each other. Miss ilma's small faction of thirty became the "conservative" or "reactionary" faction, the Congress of fully one hundred and fifty became the "progressives," "radicals" or "democratic control group." Miss Ilma complained to the papers that the Communists had washed their faces and put on their best clothes and had "ganged up on her." This is actually what the United Press carried on Thursday. Miss Ilma was licked.

Summary.—What occurred at the Congress was a struggle between two forces. One represented the extreme right. The other a coalition from the left, a solid, unbending united front between Communist and Socialist youth. It is true that the left wing delegates were at all times a minority but the Ilma group was a small minority likewise. The majority of delegates, the youth of the middle classes, had to be won for either side by decision and an adequate program. It would be unrealistic to think that the Boy Scout delegates had any initial predisposition against the fascist tactics and policies of the Central Bureau, or even understood their implications. The majority of delegates were precisely like that, but practically all stuck to the end with the left wing against the highly romanticized Ilma.

Miss Ilma was crushed and a militant program carried because the left wing, the Communist and Social youth in particular, stayed solid throughout. The middle class elements responded when working class youth presented a united program. Before the Workers Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill was supported by the Congress, the impact of the crisis upon the middle class had to be demonstrated. They had to recognize the problem as their own, not an alien appendage. When that was done, Miss Ilma, her program and her methods, went with the rubbish. The left was the center of gravity opposing the fascist right not by a process of isolation, but by a process of understanding and penetration. In this respect, the Congress represented, in miniature, the actual relation of class forces in the struggle against Fascism.

An examination of the two programs shows how far apart was the Congress and its rump. The Congress supports the Workers Unemployment and Social Insurance bill, the peace proposals of the Soviet Union for complete disarmament, the 30-hour week, with no reduction in pay, the unrestricted right of all workers to join trade unions of their own choice, including the right to strike and picket. It proposes the abolition of the transient camps and, pending that, abolition of military control of those camps, as well as the abolition of the R.O.T.C. and C.M.T.C. Contrast this to the right-wing program which typically supports the maintenance of the camps, increased armaments, and against all isms but "Americanism." Here are programs as wide apart as the poles. Miss Ilma was completely isolated and found herself on the outside of a Congress upon which she had expended generous amounts of time, money and something less than astuteness in an effort to frame it in her own image. She was left with nothing but thirty of her hand-picked "unaffiliated" delegates. The Congress remained as a body behind the militant leadership of the broad, united front opposition. That was an achievement. The lesson should be learned far and wide.

Out of this Congress came something important. Never before have such a variety of organizations united on such a militant program. The executive board of fifteen elected to carry on the work of the Congress has a representative of the churches, the transient youth, a trade union, student organizations, the Young People's Socialist League and the Young Communist League. Two steps forward were taken. For the first time since the Socialist exodus from the American League Against War and Fascism are Communists and Socialists together again. The unity transmitted itself to much wider sections, including middle class youth. In fact, on the second night of the Congress, when Earl Browder spoke for the Communist Party and Norman Thomas spoke for the Socialist Party, Thomas stated that he believed a united front between the two parties would be achieved by September 1. He hailed the French parties for having come to an agreement and declared himself in favor of similar agreement here. This youth Congress was a long step in that direction.

The job ahead is to transform words into deeds. The executive board has already decided to hold a conference of youth in Washington, when Congress opens, to press the demands of the First American Youth Congress, especially for H.R. 7598, the unemployment insurance bill. This is the answer to Fascism, this was the achievement made possible by a real united front. Perhaps Miss Ilma was right to be optimistic about the possibilities of youth. Only don't capitalize it.

A Million Workers Say Strike!

CARL REEVE

THE unanimous decision of the 500 delegates to the Thirty-third National Convention of the United Textile Workers Union of America, with 300,000 members, to declare a general strike in the textile industry, was not an empty threat.

For a whole week these 500 delegates met in stormy session at the Town Hall, New York City. There are one million textile workers in the United States, and in this strike convention every branch of the industry was represented. There were delegates from the silk, woolen, worsted, cotton and rayon mills of New England. The Southern textile states —Georgia, Alabama, North and South Carolina, Virginia and Tennessee—sent scores of delegates. The hosiery, silk and thread mills, the dye houses of Eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York were represented. Textile workers in twenty states and 217 cities, including the Pacific Coast, met and elected delegates representing 300,000 workers.

The gathering in Town Hall was something new in the history of the textile industry of the United States. Never before has there been such a representative gathering of textile workers. Two years ago the United Textile Workers union was no more than a dormant skeleton, with only scattered locals. Since then 230,000 workers, in 537 new local unions, have joined the U.T.W.

It was this mass influx into the United Textile Union which caused the seeming contradictions in the debates. On the one hand there were the delegates of the new local unions — raw, inexperienced in parliamentary maneuvering — illusions clinging to them, but militant and fighting mad. On the other hand there was the leadership of President Thomas MacMahon, mossbacked and musty, in the saddle for a score of years.

When a telegram was read from William

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Green expressing regrets that he could not come, there was not a ripple of applause. When George Googe, personal representative of Green, worked himself into a lather exhorting the delegates to turn to "the greatest humanitarian who ever sat in the White House —Franklin D. Roosevelt"—there was stony silence.

But when delegate Horace Reviere of Manchester, N. H., declared, "The textile workers have looked to the N.R.A. and been disappointed. We must strike every textile mill from Alabama to Maine"—the keynote of the convention had been sounded. For five minutes the thunder of applause mingled with the "rebel yells" of the southern delegates. It was a strike convention.

Why did the textile workers come to this convention disillusioned with the N.R.A. and determined to strike? The deal given the textile workers in the past year is the reason for the unprecedented urge for struggle. When the N.R.A. set the minimum wage in the industry at $13.00 ($12.00 for the South), this figure tended to become the maximum wage. In the skilled trades, of which there are many in the industry, actual wage reductions went into force with the N.R.A.

The stretchout (speedup) became an unbearable burden to the textile workers. Curtailments, a polite name for layoffs, were ordered by the textile code authorities of the N.R.A., which further reduced wages far below the code minimum. Reports to the union office show that in Alabama the average wage of the textile workers is $7.30 a week, for a thirty-hour week. According to government estimates, the average wage for all cotton workers (including the skilled categories) was $13.31 per week, in April, 1934. Even at that time, many thousands of textile workers were receiving wages considerably below the code minimums.

Speaking of the stretch-out, which has been responsible for a number of the strikes in the industry, J. A. Frier, of Columbia, S. C., told the delegates that the number of picks per minute have been increased in his mill from 160 to 176 in the last couple of years.

The company store still holds sway in many Southern mill villages. Delegate Charles McAbee, of Inman, S. C., brought with him the Inman company store coupons, which he said the workers are forced to sell at a 25 percent discount in order to get ready cash.

R. G. Strickland, of Selma, N. C., said: "Six workers in my mill now do the work formerly done by 23. There are now four loom-fixers doing the work that was done by ten loom-fixers. We have to make 144 picks a minute, whereas formerly 136 picks were turned out. The weavers in my mill now make $21 for forty hours of work that they got $27.95 for two years ago. Outside of the few loom-fixers and weavers, all the workers in the mill get only thirty cents an hour."

When Frier clenched his fist and said: "We are determined to have a reduction in the machine load," he voiced the burning grievance of the cotton textile workers, who are being continuously speeded up, their productivity increased, while their wages at best remain stationary.

The textile workers have more than once taken their demands before the N.R.A. The demands in the present strike situation are: abolition of the stretch-out (reduction in the machine load); the thirty-hour week, with two shifts; wage differentials (minimum wages for the skilled and semi-skilled as well as for the unskilled); recognition of the union. These are the demands which the textile workers have been laying unsuccessfully before the N.R.A. for a year. The answer received by the textile workers was a whole series of "curtailments" which further drastically reduced their wages. Accompanying this lowering of the living standards, carried through directly by the code authorities, was a sweeping drive to destroy their union by the firing of thousands of union men.

This spring the cotton textile code authority decreed a "curtailment" in production of 25 percent. This reduced the wages of the half-million cotton-textile workers far below the minimum code. The cotton textile workers decided to strike. The strike date was set for the first week in June. On the eve of the strike, on June 2, the reactionary union leadership of President MacMahon and Vice-President Francis Gorman signed an agreement jointly with General Johnson.

This agreement threw away every one of the above demands of the cotton textile workers. The strike was called off without consultation with the workers. The first point of the agreement was: "Strike order to be countermanded without prejudice to the right of labor to strike." On the question of demands the N.R.A. Division of Planning and Research was to investigate and report on hours (the thirty-hour week demand) on wages (the demand for an increase in wages) and other demands.

The N.R.A. report on hours made a few weeks later is almost unbelievable. On the heels of the 25 percent shutdown, carried through by the N.R.A., the N.R.A. ruled, after solemn "investigation" that "it will require ninety hours per week of productive machine operation [or ten hours more than the eighty hour maximum in two forty-hour shifts permitted under the Cotton Textile Industry Code] when normal annual consumption of cotton in the U.S. is obtained."

Thus the demand of the union for the thirty-hour week (two shifts making sixty hours), or ten hours reduction per week, without any decrease in pay, was denied by these learned men. As the N.R.A. itself declared, "The report was prepared . . . as a result of the contention of textile labor leaders that the maximum hours in the industry should be reduced to two thirty-hour shifts a week." With this report declaring for increased hours out of the way, the 25 percent curtailment, with a corresponding 25 percent reduction in pay, was carried through.

The N.R.A. report on wages in answer to the union's demand for pay increases, is just as satisfactory to the cotton textile workers. It concluded with these words, "Under existing conditions, there is no factual or statistical basis for any general increase in Cotton Textile Code wage rates." An analysis of the report shows that it was based on the percentage of increase in hourly rates, not accounting for the decrease in hours worked effected when the N.R.A. began.

The same National Run Around was given to the other branches of the textile industry. A "survey" conducted under Frances Perkins' direction netted the Paterson silk workers a three percent reduction in wages. The woolen and worsted workers set a strike date and again their leaders postponed the strike and signed an "agreement" with the N.R.A. with none of the demands granted.

This is the background of the meeting which called for a general textile strike. Before the national convention met, the Paterson silk workers, in referendum, voted for a strike. Several thousand walked out in Alabama, and thousands more in Georgia, New England, and other states.

Terror against the textile workers increased. Before the walkout centering around Huntsville, Ala., 1,500 cases of discrimination against union members were reported to the union offices from Alabama alone.

The conditions of terror under which the textile workers are striking can be judged from the letter of Mollie Dowd, union organizer in Huntsville, to the convention:

> I have never seen a group of business men acting just like them (the C.of C. of Huntsville). They are still boldly threatening our lives and send me word every day that they are coming after me that night to take me for a ride just like they did Dean and you need not discount that they will do it. They have sent us word that the American Legion has promised to lend them the machine guns they have in the Armory and that they intend to get us no matter how we shield or protect ourselves. The pity of this is that we have no protection except of course that loyal guarding of our strikers, but I hate to see them shot down. And I fear that will happen if Huntsville is not curbed in some way. They say as soon as they get rid of us that they will put these workers back in the mill at the point of a gun if necessary. . . . It is a thoroughly Democratic town. . . . I cannot understand such Democrats. . . . Please help us with relief. They have hopes of starving us to death and how they will rejoice.

W. M. Adcock, of Huntsville, Ala., appeared on the convention platform with terrible scars seaming his head. He told in simple language, with deep feeling, how he was sent over to Decatur, Ala., famous for the Scottsboro trials, to organize the workers there. He was shot several times through the legs, and beaten with lead pipes and blackjacks by the Chamber of Commerce thugs. He was left for dead. "I would be glad to give my life to get better conditions for the Southern textile workers," he told the convention, which responded with thunderous applause.

From all sections the upsurge of the textile workers against the stretchout, against discrimination, against low wages, rang through the hall. "Whether we get a strike vote or

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not, silk workers will strike," said Russell Wood, president of the Easton, Pa., Silk Workers Federation. "The silk workers of Paterson district have already voted in referendum to go on strike for their demands. If you do not call the silk strike, our union will be destroyed," said Frank Schweitzer, secretary-treasurer of the Silk Workers Association of Paterson. A delegate from South Carolina declared, "A large majority of the textile workers of my state favor action." "New England workers have been ready for months to go on strike," Horace Reviere told the convention. Conservative leaders like Reviere and Schweitzer thought it best to swim with the tide.

The militancy of the delegates was shown in the 103 votes given to the resolution of Local Union 1791, Reading, Pa., condemning William Green for his desertion of the San Francisco general strike. This resolution characterized Green's anti-general strike statement as

> not only an open disavowal of action undertaken by and carried on by recognized A.F. of L unions, in said strike, but was in hardly disguised language a direct attack upon the general strike then in progress. . . . Instead of remaining with his army as a good general would have done, he deserted them and as a result events have shown that this statement of President Green's played a big part in breaking down the morale of the strikers and opening the way for the disintegration of the strike. We condemn the action of Green . . . in deserting the interests and welfare of the courageous San Francisco strikers.

It took the utmost efforts of MacMahon's entire machine, and a hysterical red scare, to secure 192 votes to defeat this resolution.

The pressure of the radicalized masses of the textile workers was also felt in the 177 votes for the resolution to declare a general strike the moment war is declared. This motion was defeated by only about forty votes. The convention went on record for a labor party, for industrial unionism, for a campaign against the company unions, and against injunctions in labor disputes.

In spite of this fine militancy, expressing the will of hundreds of thousands of radicalized workers, the end of the convention saw the old line, conservative, MacMahon leadership elected to office almost without opposition. This contradiction came about because the militancy of the workers was not organized into a solid, well knit rank and file opposition. The rank and file was duped and a leadership was elected which is notoriously opposed to strike action—to lead a general strike.

The attitude of MacMahon toward the question of organizing the Negroes reveals his reactionary line. The U.T.W. maintains Jim Crow locals. There was not a single Negro delegate at the convention. MacMahon, after his election, stood in the wings of the stage, beaming, and surrounded by reporters. He told them of his intention of going at once to Roosevelt. "Are there any Negroes in the industry?" the writer asked MacMahon.

"A good many," MacMahon answered. "They are in separate locals. I believe in separate locals myself. The Negroes would rather have it that way too. I wouldn't want my daughter to sleep with a nigger."

When MacMahon was asked why none of the Southern Jim Crow locals sent delegates he said, "They didn't have the money."

MacMahon thus encourages the most chauvinistic prejudices, instead of attempting to achieve the solidarity of the textile workers, regardless of race. "When in Rome do as the Romans do," MacMahon said. He added that "some elements try to embarrass the union by placing us in a difficult position."

Then, as to women. The latest figures available show that there are 452,000 women in the industry—more than in any other industry in the country. In fact in the silk and knitting branches the women outnumber the men. Yet not one woman was even nominated for office. Seventeen officers were elected.

Two maneuvers in convention served to bring about the re-election of MacMahon, a result at which the Journal of Commerce on August 18 editorially rejoiced. One was the demagogy of the MacMahon machine. MacMahon knew from the outset that if he opposed strike action he would be swept off the platform. At no point in the convention did the officials of the union oppose the strike resolutions. They proposed that the strike date be set by the Executive Board. In this they were defeated, and an amendment to set the cotton textile strike (of half a million workers) on or before September 1 was overwhelmingly carried.

But MacMahon, using the argument (in the caucuses) that it was bad to put in "inexperienced" leadership while going into battle, was able to win over some of the Southern delegates for his re-election. He was also able to have the strike date for silk, woolen and worsted referred to the Executive Board. The MacMahon leadership killed a resolution calling for withdrawal of the officials from all N.R.A. Boards by pushing through an amendment, "unless the U.T.W. gets fairer and greater representation," on the N.R.A. boards.

MacMahon's demagogy was directed towards binding the union to Roosevelt and the N.R.A. His line was to criticize the N.R.A. —to declare "fight," but "fight in the N.R.A." He directed attention to negotiating inside these boards instead of toward actual preparation and organization of the strike.

This tactic is most clearly demonstrated in the printed report of Francis Gorman, vice-president, who is now head of the strike committee. Gorman "criticizes" the N.R.A. for thwarting the textile workers in all their demands. Then at the very end of his report he declares:

> I desire to express our sincere appreciation to the research department of the American Federation of Labor and the Labor Advisory Board of the N.R.A. for the splendid assistance they have rendered to the United Textile Workers of America, and their willingness at all times to cooperate in our endeavors.

Roosevelt further strengthened MacMahon's hand by his appointment as member of the N.R.A. Labor Advisory Board only a few hours before the elections.

But this tactic alone would not have saved the tottering MacMahon machine. To Emil Rieve, a Socialist party leader, head of the Hosiery Worker's Federation, went the honors for re-electing MacMahon. Rieve, until the last day of the convention, was feverishly electioneering for the presidency in the place of MacMahon, as a "progressive." The militant element at the convention was supporting Rieve and expected his election. At the last moment, Rieve withdrew his candidacy, leaving his followers dumbfounded. MacMahon was elected unopposed, after calling Rieve to the chair to preside during the elections.

After MacMahon was elected he said, "I ask the delegates to rise to their feet in honor of Emil Rieve for the manner in which he has conducted the elections." The photographers took pictures of MacMahon and Rieve side by side on the platform, and Rieve was elected to the Executive Board of the union with the votes of the MacMahon machine. A few hours later Rieve was arguing against the calling of a strike in the silk, woolen or worsted industry, on the ground that there should be "one strike at a time." Rieve's rapid transition from progressive, pro-strike leader to floor leader for MacMahon cleared the way for the latter's election and prevented the militants from organizing their forces to nominate a real militant against MacMahon.

The delegates belonging to the Lovestone group (Keller, Rubinstein and Herman) while they made "left" speeches of a general nature, did not concretely expose the treacherous role of the MacMahon leadership and did not direct sharp criticism toward this leadership. Finally, they did not put up one of their leading delegates as a candidate to run against MacMahon. Thus their "radical" speeches were nullified.

The Worcester, Mass., Labor News, A.F. of L. paper, in commenting on these events, stated: "Mr. Gorman is quoted as saying that 'Mr. MacMahon's re-election will have a strong influence in avoiding the calling of a general strike.'"

The Journal of Commerce says that because of MacMahon's election, "it is reasonably safe to count upon the continuation of old policies of union administration."

But anyone who heard the militant voice of the masses of textile workers at the convention must be convinced that it will be impossible for MacMahon to prevent the cotton textile strike, and strikes in the silk, woolen, rayon and worsted industry, from taking place. The danger lies in the beheading of the strike by MacMahon before the demands are won.

If the strike is to be properly organized, the local unions will have to do it by setting up their mill strike committees to lead the struggle. These committees are a safeguard against the splitting up of the strikers' ranks into localized strikes which could be broken a section at a time.

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Robert Minor, the Man

ORRICK JOHNS

I FIRST KNEW Bob Minor as the central figure of a group of intellectuals and social workers in St. Louis. It sounds strange today, but it was a brief period unlike either his beginnings or his later life. Doubtless it had its influence in removing the last scales of capitalist illusions from his eyes. He was already the famous cartoonist of the Post-Dispatch, his work being reproduced regularly on a nation-wide scale. His associates understood him, in their own terms, as a "success" with a capital "S," but they got little further than that. The man baffled them. The honesty and driving strength that forced its way out of his slightest actions and words came from a source that the thinly speculative minds surrounding him could not fathom. It was not yet sufficiently obvious to them that these qualities would carry him to ends they could not follow. He had a tremendous definiteness; implacable rejections; his decisions were based on a process of long and original reasoning that was baffling. It was all disturbing. One could not account for him only on the theory that genius has its whims. The man was too damned terribly consistent. It showed even in his walk, with the broad cranium thrust forward, the body balanced by its momentum—a catapult with an Indian-like litheness.

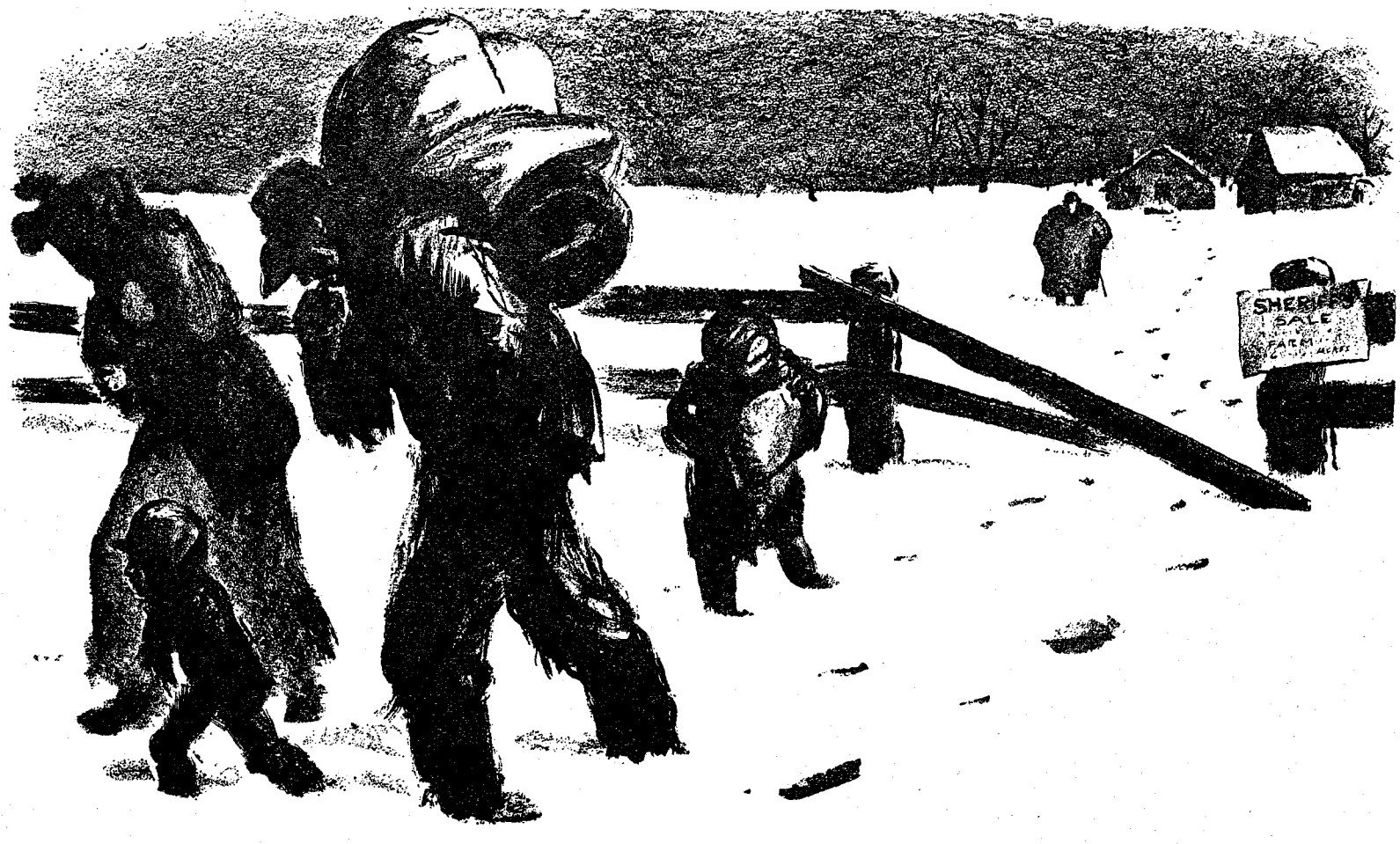
Few of these people knew that behind the massive, black-browed fellow, still in his middle twenties, lay a rich formative process, a precocious and bitter apprenticeship to life. He never spoke of the hard poverty of his youth in general terms. But he often brought up an incident to illustrate a concrete point. His later work throngs with these youthful pictures of the brutal South. His early proletarian years were of a decisive character.

What was this boyhood like? Minor's schooling began in San Antonio at the age of ten and lasted four years. He fought everything near his size on two feet. At fourteen, he has said, his family needed the $3 a week that he could earn. He became a Western Union messenger boy. His errands carried him past a sign-painter's shop. In the window of the shop was a big painting. It was a picture of a sturdy old man fishing from a long boat while his six sons pulled the oars. Storm threatened and the sky was streaked with lightning. The picture bore an advertising caption, but to Bob it was magnificent. He became the sign-painter's apprentice. He had been making sketches from childhood, but the sign-painter's shop was his first school, and for many years his only school, in drawing.

When his wages were cut from fifty cents to twenty-five cents a day, he quit. From the age of 16 to 19 he knocked about the Southwest as a migratory worker on farms, railroad construction gangs, in machine shops and at the carpenter's trade. He became a member of Local 717 of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners. He has told, in an interview by Philip Sterling in the Daily Worker, of his first introduction to Socialism:

One day a grizzled Irishman who was driving a "freight wagon" (now an extinct vehicle) offered him a lift, after first demanding whether he was a workingman. During the ride of two hours, the old man gave him a glowing account of the theory of Socialism, drew on his graphic powers to create the image of a socialist world for the green boy. "I have never forgotten it," Minor said. "I believe I could repeat what he told me word for word."

More significant to the future of the Communist leader were the experiences that crys-



Evolution of the American Peasant

(*The Liberator, Jan.*, 1924)

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tallized his convictions on Negro equality. He says that during the whole of his boyhood he "worried and wondered" about this problem of the members of an oppressed race whom he saw every day treated as something sub-human. Once returning from a job on a bridge gang, he got into a box car where there were three white moonshiners. Some Negroes climbed on the same car. Minor had a few cookies in his pocket and he offered them to the Negroes first. It was a mortal insult to the white men. He had to defend himself and the Negroes from their knives by a quick draw of his gun.

Another time a white man proudly pulled a shrivelled object from his pocket and showed it to the boy of sixteen. It was a human thumb, a "souvenir" taken from the body of a Negro lynched at San Angelo.

These incidents and scores of others were stored in his memory. They were the seed of a powerful indignation that made him, during all his years in the Communist Party, one of the greatest fighters against the enslavement, jim-crowing and lynching of Negroes. He began this work shortly after he joined the Socialist Party in 1907, but he was quickly convinced, he tells us, that Socialist Party methods were helpless to advance the cause of Negro emancipation.

Minor's last job in the South was that of assistant stereotyper on the San Antonio Gazette. This job gave him a chance to develop his talent for drawing through the practice of etching corrections on the plates, but he was soon submitting cartoons which were published unsigned. The transition to the Post-Dispatch followed rapidly after that. There he worked as a routine artist until he was chosen as the regular cartoonist.

It is no wonder that with this background Minor was a puzzle to the petit bourgeois intellectuals of St. Louis. The hardest jolt of all was his stand on the treatment of Negroes. St. Louis was and is a jim-crow town, and how!* The appearance of a full-fledged Southerner, a Texan-Virginian, who advocated social equality for Negroes, made the admiration of some of his followers turn a little sour in their gullets. These delicate qualms have been transformed into loud "I-told-you-so's" as the former admirers have shifted their position with the times, and become good social fascists shouting for red-extermination.

Bob had certain strong preferences and catch-words in those days. He was looking for "tough-minded" people, and was seeking to toughen the working structure of his own brain, which meant, of course, to think in terms of materialism, and with dialectic integrity. The thing that has made Minor a difficult quantity always to professors is just this wholeness. Theory and action were already united in him. He studied and spoke his mind with all his experience of reality.

His dislike of the word "respect" was another characteristic at that time. To him no individual or institution in capitalist society was worthy of "respect"; and if a squeamish soul objected on the score of sentiment or tradition, he was annihilated by thunderous reason. Bob was reading like a bottomless gulf, but he soon found his robust heroes. He seized the knotty points and cracked them by hard sense. *Bazaroff,* of Turgenieff's "Fathers and Sons," took a tremendous hold on him. He talked of these things. I remember his repeating an episode from a story of Gorki's. It was an atrocious description of hunger. The character threw himself on the ground to relieve his tortured belly, and I have forgotten whether he put his face down to smell the earth or tore handfuls from it, but I shall never forget Minor's gestures in re-enacting the scene, and his joy in the stark metaphor, *"It smelt like bread!"*

His progress caused devastation among the humbugs. I recall a woman who got off an insulting wise-crack. Minor received it with perfect immobility and a prolonged scrutiny of the speaker. Then he turned and walked out of the room. He left a silence that you couldn't pierce with artillery. It weighed like a rock, and the mask of the finely veneered creature broke down.

His humor was atmospheric, like a change in the intensity of daylight. A laugh grew in him slowly, from the feet up, taking nourishment as it came, and burst in double ra-

Gompers at the Gates

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I am talking of Minor in the
He is still like that, but there is some
the impressionism of youth that the ve
wisely economizes. Of course, his big job
those days was to make himself the greatest living cartoonist. But Minor originated the bold, black and shaded stroke of the lithographer's crayon in cartooning. Nobody could get size into a space as he did, nobody make such men of tiger-like energy. His cartoons seemed to come out of him like a bullet, but in reality he made and destroyed many sketches. Of all those thousands of superb drawings, he possesses only two originals. He has never kept any of them, and has no idea what has become of most of them. They turn up at exhibitions or in reproductions and he asks himself, "Did I really draw that?"

Where now are his many imitators? Some no doubt, are still holding down good berths, heiling the New Deal in pictures. His *pupils* as distinct from his imitators—are revolutionary artists, such as Jacob Burck and Fred Ellis.

I hope I have not given readers the impression that Bob Minor at twenty-six was an ascetic. He was chock full of life and his energy to see people and take fun was terrific. He was always eager to get out of the city, to swim, camp, play tennis. He yanked the paddle of a canoe with the same chest and dorsal fury that you see today when he makes a speech to a hundred thousand people.

* Relief rolls in June, 1934, revealed that a Negro family in St. Louis received on an average one-half the relief given to a white family, and mortality statistics published at the same time showed that the death-rate of Negroes was precisely double that of whites.

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But Bob had another activity of basic importance. He was carrying on his study of Socialism and organization. Old St. Louisans remember Dr. Leo Kaplan, a tall, scholarly, saturnine man, an ear-and-nose specialist. Kaplan was a left-wing Socialist and a thorough Marxist. Of him Minor has said that he did more to influence his life than any other man except Lenin. Kaplan interested Minor in the famous case of Big Bill Haywood, then on trial for his life, with Moyer and Pettibone, on frame-up murder charges growing out of the labor struggles in Colorado. Bob became a regular contributor to the Appeal to Reason, and a member of the City Central Committee of the Socialist Party.

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ate," and moving always toward the Left, took a position sympathetic to the anarcho-syndicalists, though he never was actually an anarchist and never repudiated any part of Marx's teachings. After a year spent in a futile search for honest art schools in France — and in somewhat disappointing contacts with pacifist-socialists of the type of Jean Jaurez—he returned to New York in the midst of widespread unemployment and suffering. The Anarchists alone were leading the struggles of the unemployed during that bitter winter of 1913-14, when preachers instigated the police to savage cruelty and beatings in order to keep men and women from sleeping in their churches. Soon afterward the War and the October Revolution were to show him the direction from which he has never swerved since.

His break with the capitalist press occurred shortly after the beginning of the World War. A series of sharp disagreements with the Pulitzers, and finally Minor's anti-imperialist stand on the War, forced the World to free him from his contract. He became the cartoonist for the New York Call, the Socialist organ. He made speaking tours under the auspices of the Call and finally went abroad as war correspondent. Writing from France and Italy, he used all his energy and talent to expose the imperialist designs of all governments, the allies as well as the Central Powers.

In 1916 he was returning from a job as correspondent in Mexico. He decided to go to California for a rest. Instead of resting, he plunged into the struggle for the release of Mooney, Billings and their three co-defendants. Writing, drawing and speaking in scores of places, Minor organized the first mass movement for the defense of Mooney. He fought the labor misleaders who betrayed Mooney. Success came in the commutation of the death sentences, to which the demands of the Russian workers' protests contributed.

It was this writer's privilege to hear Robert Minor on the platform of a great Mooney mass meeting in San Francisco, in March, 1933. Fifteen thousand storming sympathizers filled the hall. Banners bearing the Hammer and Sickle waved in the aisles. Seventeen years after the event, Minor, one by one, called the roll of the labor traitors of 1916-17, and named their treason. Most of them were living. Some sat and listened to their deeds in the audience. That year and a half of struggle on the Coast was the most formative single experience but one in Minor's life. The other was his work in the Soviet Union just after the October Revolution.

Early in 1918, Minor was in Petrograd. He became the friend of Lenin. He organized propaganda against intervention. It should be especially recorded here that he used his art making posters to persuade American troops at Archangel not to fire on Russian workers, to insist on their withdrawal in spite of the orders of their officers. And this, too, was successful. There are recorded mutinies of American troops in that shameful robber invasion.

Robert Minor's life since 1918 is history, known to hundreds of thousands of American workers. Since then he has suffered in his body for the cause of revolution. He has seen the inside of a score of prisons. He has been near death by execution in France, and by illness and abuse in a prison hospital in New York.

He, along with William Z. Foster, Israel Amter, and Harry Raymond were jailed for six months after the history-making March 6 demonstration in Union Square at which some 110,000 New York workers marched for unemployment relief. But there is no space for a detailed account in this brief sketch of the man. It remains to be said that the working masses will think of him with affection on the occasion of his fiftieth birthday, which is being commemorated this week. He can reflect that one-half of his adult life coincides with the life of the Communist Party of the U.S.A., Section of the Communist International. The Party also celebrates its fifteenth anniversary in September. He has been a member since the Party was formed in 1919.

He has seen it pass through the primitive period, illegality, through unceasing daily struggles for working-class rights until it has widened into a party with a mass following, into a party destined to lead the American proletariat and its allies out of the horrors of capitalism. Minor has borne his part in that historic task. He is an inspiration to all who come to the revolution—both from the working class and from its allies in the middle class.

Child Labor (*The Daily Worker*, 1924)

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The Exodus from Dixie

(*The Liberator, June,* 1923)

Jews in the Soviet Union

JOSHUA KUNITZ

WHENEVER I think of the Jews in the Soviet Union, the herculean figure of Yossif Yakovlevich, looming head and shoulders above the milling crowd in the lobby of the Jewish Kamerny Theatre in Moscow, comes before my mind. He was dressed in the long, rude, gray military cloak worn by the Soviet Cavalry, and but for the two Orders of the Red Banner on his broad chest and the three rhomboids on his collar, indicating his high military rank, one might have taken him for an ordinary rank and file Red Army man.

I remember distinctly the strange sense of incongruity I experienced on hearing this high military officer conversing loudly in Yiddish without the slightest suggestion of self-consciousness in either his voice or his bearing. And what a racy, incisive, colorful Yiddish it was! His companions were the Yiddish poet Markish and the Jewish-Russian poet Mikhail Golodny, both of whom I had met before. The conversation veered from a discussion of the play, a brilliant burlesque of the old sentimental Jewish operetta *The Witch* by Goldfarb, to the state of the Jewish arts in the Soviet Union, to the Jewish collectives in the South and finally to Biro-Bidjan whence Yossif Yakovlevich had recently returned after a tour of inspection. Yossif Yakovlevich was enthusiastic in his report and firm in his belief that despite tremendous difficulties Biro-Bidjan was destined to become an autonomous Jewish Republic, the haven of the oppressed Jewish masses the world over. (Incidentally, his prophecy seems to be coming true. On May 7, 1934, the Soviet government declared Biro-Bidjan an autonomous Jewish region, which declaration has been justly acclaimed by the Jewish working masses of the world as the last step leading to an autonomous Jewish Republic in the not very remote future.)

The bell rang. We all hastened to our seats. As I sat in the dimmed hall watching the brilliant performance of the play and listening to the old Jewish folk tunes, the great miracle of what was happening to me and about me suddenly emerged from the depths of my consciousness. I am in Moscow, a thing quite inconceivable in pre-revolutionary days, when, but for a few rich merchants and professionals, no Jew was ever allowed to enter this holy of holies of Greek Catholic orthodoxy. Now I am here, visiting a Jewish theatre, conversing in Yiddish with a Jewish military officer and two Jewish poets. I recalled my childhood in the Ghetto, how I dreaded to pass the gentile sections of the town for fear of being jeered at, of having rocks and rotten apples thrown at me, of being beaten, of having my clothes ripped. I recalled particularly one gloomy Passover Eve, when my father packed his crying family into a wagon and, under the cover of night, shipped us away to another city, for there were rumors of a possible pogrom in our town. Hundreds of scenes of humiliation and suffering crowded my memory. Hitler was not yet in power, but on passing Germany I had heard the vile slogans of the storm troopers resound through the streets of Berlin. I forgot where I was. A monstrous fear began to clutch at my heart, the ancient, immemorial fear of the hounded, beaten, persecuted Jew.

Suddenly there was a loud outburst of laughter. I was shaken out of my black reveries. I stared about me. Laughing Jewish faces. Yossif Yakovlevich with the gleaming Orders of the Red Banner on his chest, a Jewish youth in the uniform of the G.P.U., a bearded Jewish patriarch with his pretty Comsomol daughter, Jewish students, and above all a host of Jewish workers. I caught Golodny's smiling eye, and a deep feeling of joy pervaded my entire being. The nightmare was dissipated; apprehension was gone. In the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics I was home, in the arms of the Soviet proletariat I was safe!

From its very inception, the workers' and peasants' government came decisively to grips with the eternal and devilishly perplexing problem of racial and national minorities. As

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early as November 15, 1917, that is immediately after the seizure of power, the working class of the Soviet Union, led by the Bolshevik Party, adopted the famous decree on the rights of nationalities signed by Lenin, then Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, and Stalin, then People's Commissar of Nationalities. "All that is living and vital [in the Soviet Union] has been freed from hateful bondage," read the decree in part. "Now there remain only the nationalities of Russia, who have suffered and still suffer oppression and tyranny. Their freedom must immediately be worked for and must be brought about resolutely and irrevocably. . . . The hideous policy of rousing hatred [among nationalities and races] must and shall never return. From now on it shall be replaced by the policy of voluntary and honest unions of nations."

The fundamental principles with regard to national minorities laid down by the decree and consistently adhered to by the Soviet Union ever since were:

1. The equality and sovereignty of all peoples in the Soviet Union.
2. The right of the peoples in the Soviet Union to self-determination, including separation and the formation of independent states.
3. The removal of every and any national and national-religious privilege and restriction.
4. The free development of the national minorities and ethnic groups living within the confines of Russia.

Seventeen years of proletarian rule have finally solved the eternal Jewish question. What colossal changes have taken place in the relative positions of the Jews in the various parts of the world. To think—in an article surveying world-wide anti-Semitism, (*Behind the Pogroms* in last week's NEW MASSES), Russia, once the classic land of savage Jewish persecution and pogroms, is not even mentioned. Economic, social and political equality of all nationalities and races in the workers' Republic, and full national self-determination removed the very basis for national oppression and discrimination. The last vestiges of anti-Semitism are being uprooted in an area extending over one-sixth of the land surface of the globe. More important, under the direction of the Communist Party, the Jewish people in the Soviet Union have gone through an amazing economic, political, social, and cultural metamorphosis.

In the semi-feudal, semi-capitalist state of the Czars, the Jews, besides suffering from perennial persecutions and pogroms, were oppressed by countless legal disabilities, forced to live within the narrow confines of the infamous "pale of settlement," kept out of the villages and the great commercial and metropolitan cities and strictly barred from agriculture and from practically all basic industries and productive occupations, except a few crafts. Fifty-five percent of the Jews in old Russia were not engaged in productive pursuits; they were middlemen, petty traders, peddlers, petty speculators. They were, to use the finely descriptive Yiddish term, *luftmenschen,* people who obtained a livelihood from the air, a livelihood precarious, savagely competitive where opportunities were so few, and for the most part miserable. Only four percent of the Jews were workers and only two percent were peasants. It was not from riches and comfort that millions of Jews fled to the slums and the sweatshops of the New World. The poverty and degradation of the Jewish masses under the Czars are universally known and need no elaboration. The War and the civil war completed a process that has been unfolding for decades. The conclusion of the civil war in 1921 found the Jewish population thoroughly and almost irretrievably ruined.

The N.E.P. brought only temporary relief to a small number of Jews. Permanent and universal improvement could come only from basic changes in the economic foundations of Jewish life. Jewish energy had to be directed into productive channels. It was a tremendous task, involving no end of adjustment and pain. The *luftmensch* had to be transformed into a worker or peasant. It meant retraining and reeducating virtually an entire people. It meant, in the words of M. J. Wachman, "the readaptation, the reorientation, and—in short—the regeneration of the former *luftmensch.*"

Though this process of regeneration had started long before, the greatest impulse was supplied by the enormous advance of Soviet industry and collectivized agriculture since the First Five-Year Plan.

Before the launching of the Plan, there was terrific unemployment in the Soviet Union. The few available jobs were naturally given to actual proletarians, among whom there were, as has already been pointed out, very few Jews. The uprooted Jewish middle class, *i.e.,* the vast majority of Russian Jews, had nothing to turn to. Petty trading met with political discouragement and social contumely. The land offered by the government provided an escape, but on the whole not a very welcome escape. Centuries of urban existence had made the Jew apprehensive of the soil. The first Jewish collective farmer I met in the Ukraine comes to mind. When asked whether he was happy on the land, this new Jewish soil-tiller—who had for forty years been a peddler—shrugged his thin shoulders, and, stroking his grayish beard, replied: "What do you mean happy? It's better than nothing; it's better than starving. Thank God for that. Happy! Farming is a *goy's* work: a Jew is not born to be a peasant."

A similar attitude I detected even among the younger Jews on the land. They, too, preferred the life, the tempo, the movement, the amenities, the culture of the city.

The Five-Year Plan brought an outburst of industrial activity. Millions of people were needed in the new factories and shops. Even people who had been attached to the soil for centuries began to gravitate to the cities. Work in the factories was more lucrative and less speculative; it offered better opportunities for study and advancement; it made one a "proletarian," and placed one both economically and politically in a somewhat privileged social category. To the Jew, particularly, work in city industries was immeasurably more attractive than the drudgery (farm work was not yet mechanized) and cultural isolation on a farm. The great exodus of the Jews to the land ceased. A vast stream of Jewish youth began to pour into the industries. In 1932, of the 2,853,000 Jews in the Soviet Union, 1,300,000 were between sixteen and fifty years old. Of these 480,000 had become workers; 450,000 were office employees, etc.; 200,000 were artisans. There remained only about 15,000 Jewish petty traders. Between 1926 and 1929, 300,000 Jews had found employment in Soviet industry. Since 1930, the process of Jewish proletarianization has been tremendously accelerated.

By 1933 the gigantic task of reconstructing the economic base of Jewish life in the U.S.S.R. was practically completed. Scores of thousands of Jewish men and women were drawn into the new giant enterprises of Soviet industry and collective agriculture. Scores of thousands are in government service, in the army, in professions. Hundreds of thousands of Jewish youths are in schools preparing for a productive life.

At the beginning of 1933 the social status of the Jews in the Soviet Union was as follows:

Workers	34 percent
Office workers	31 percent
Artisans	14 percent
Peasants	12 percent

The remainder is divided between professional and miscellaneous occupations.

The crowning achievement of the Soviet Government in solving the Jewish problem is, of course, its historic decision of May 7 by which Biro-Bidjan becomes an autonomous Jewish region. While the representatives of the Jewish bourgeoisie and the Zionist servants of British imperialism at their Congress in Geneva, while these potential and real Jewish fascists are shedding tears over the fate of Jewry in the Soviet Union, charging, according to an Associated Press dispatch in the New York Times (August 21, 1934), that "the Jewish religion, Hebrew literature, and Zionism are persecuted in Soviet Russia" and recommending "negotiations to obtain guarantees for Jews whose economic life . . . is being crushed by the economic policy of Soviet Russia," while a group of Orthodox Jewish lickspittles in Germany urge their co-religionists to support Hitler and the "Fatherland," the Jewish workers in every capitalist country in the world are looking toward the Soviet Union and Biro-Bidjan as the only bright spots in the otherwise hideously bleak picture of Jewish life.

Read the "Declaration of Representatives of Workers' Mass Organizations" in this country:

> . . . At the time of this horrible increase of anti-Semitism in all the capitalist countries of the world, a totally different condition prevails in the Soviet Union. There anti-Semitism is classed as a serious crime; pogroms of any form of instigations towards national hatreds are impossible. The Jews, as well as all other national minorities enjoy there complete emancipation. . . .

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In the light of this condition, the historic decision of the Soviet government in relation to Biro-Bidjan as a Jewish autonomous region becomes even more significant. Ten thousand Jewish toilers are at present engaged in active pioneering in Biro-Bidjan. Ten thousand more will be settled in the course of this year. . . .

Jewish masses in America, bear in mind that the historic decision of the Soviet government is totally different from the notorious Balfour declaration about a "Jewish Homeland" in Palestine. That declaration turned out to be nothing more than a soap bubble. It was a war manoeuver on the part of the imperialist government of England which deceived both Jew and Arab in order to keep both of them chained to its imperialist chariot.

Do not forget that the Zionists allied themselves with British imperialists. Jewish legions were organized in support of British imperialism and the lives of thousands of Jewish young men were sacrificed. The object of Zionism is to wrest the land from the Arabs and to squeeze the Arabs out of industrial employment, this must inevitably lead to war between the Jew and the Arab; this spells the growth of Fascism and Chauvinism in Palestine.

In Biro-Bidjan there is no need of wresting the land from anyone. There is no room in Biro-Bidjan for a despicable chauvinist campaign—the land is vast, its resources are abundant and thanks to the generous assistance of the Soviet government, and thanks to the cooperation of all the nationalities of the Soviet Union, Biro-Bidjan will be built as a Jewish autonomous territory. This is wherein lies the significance of the historic decision of the Soviet government on May 7, 1934. . . .

Similar enthusiastic declarations and statements come pouring in from all over the capitalist world, especially from countries contiguous to the Soviet Union with large and oppressed Jewish populations, from Poland, Lithuania, Rumania, etc. Take, for instance, the July 24 issue of the workers' Yiddish paper Friend, published in Warsaw, Poland. Here you will find a whole collection of resolutions, letters, and telegrams from countless towns and villages in Poland, under the general heading—"The Jewish Poor Greet Biro-Bidjan." The Jewish workers of Wolyn, Berezna, Zawiercie, Boryslaw, Schodnica, Ciechanow, Stawiski, etc., declare that they are "ready to rise at the first call to help build Biro-Bidjan." "We will not be deterred by the heaviest sacrifices," declare the forty workers from Zavertche. All of them attack the Zionists and their theories as utterly worthless in guiding the destinies of the poor Jewish masses. Dr. Nahum Goldmann, president of the Committee of Jewish Delegations at Geneva, demands, according to the United Press, "toleration for the Jewish language" in the Soviet Union. The impudence of pressing such a demand on a government which has been unstintingly supporting and financing every effort of the Jewish masses to have schools for the Jewish children in their mother tongue, a government which has been maintaining Jewish institutions of higher learning, pedagogical institutes, and high schools—all conducted in the Jewish language. A number of Soviet universities have departments of Yiddish literature and Jewish culture. The Soviet government has established a series of Jewish theatres in Moscow, Kharkov, Minsk, Kiev, Odessa, and is now building the first Jewish theatre in Biro-Bidjan. A great and growing variety of Jewish newspapers and magazines are being published in the Soviet Union. The Daily Emes, in Moscow, circulation 30,000; Stern, in Kharkov, 20,000; October, in Minsk, 15,000; Young Leninist, in Minsk, 10,000; Stand Ready, in Kharkov, 30,000; Odessa Worker, 6,000; Socialist Village, in Kharkov, 10,000; Atheist, in Moscow, 10,000; Biro-Bidjan Stern, in Biro-Bidjan, 4,000; etc., etc.

Contrary to the assertions of the bourgeois gentlemen at Geneva, it is absolutely untrue that the Jewish religion, or any other religion, is prohibited in the Soviet Union. One can go to synagogue any time one has the urge to pray. Of course the Jewish religion is not being encouraged, just as every other religion in the Soviet Union is not being encouraged. And, quite naturally, among the most active members of the *Bezbozhniks* (Godless) are Jews.

It is quite untrue that the Hebrew language is prohibited by the Bolsheviks. But who in the U.S.S.R., except philologists, would now care to study this thoroughly obsolete tongue of the ancient Hebrews. The Jewish masses, the workers, the tailors, the shoemakers, the poor, never knew Hebrew. They knew as much Hebrew as the average Catholic worker or peasant knows Latin. On the other hand, the Yiddish language, the language of the masses, is now in a period of efflorescence. No other country in the world with a large Jewish population can boast of such a vigorous and voluminous Yiddish literature as that produced by the pleiade of new Yiddish writers in the U.S.S.R.

True, Zionist propaganda is prohibited. But this does not indicate any discrimination against the Jews. Zionism is bourgeois chauvinism; and bourgeois chauvinism is prohibited in the U.S.S.R., whether expounded by Ukrainian, Georgian, Uzbek, Jewish, Great Russian or any other nationalist group. In short, economically, socially, politically, culturally, in the matter of religion, the Jews are the absolute equal of every national and racial group in the Soviet Union. If anything, the Jew, because of the centuries-old persecution to which he was, and in capitalist countries still is, being subjected, has been treated by the Soviet government with especial consideration and tenderness. The kind of "discrimination" is in perfect harmony with Bolshevik principles. Both Lenin and Stalin, as well as every other Communist leader, repeatedly emphasized that the utmost assistance and help of the state as a whole must be extended to those nationalities who because of their backwardness, or because they were victims of special Czarist oppression and persecution, were in some respects more helpless or backward than the rest of the country.

Five Thousand Farms for Sale

EDWARD NEWHOUSE

FOR decades this enraging taunt has been flung into the faces of farmers all over the country: How is it Pennsylvania Dutch can make a go of it?

Well, they can't. You can quote five thousand Bucks County farmers and their families on that.

Bucks County is the very heart of Pennsylvania Dutch country. Traditionally, it is the land of the contented cow, the Mennonite deacon and the omnipotent hex sign. Politically it has been the breeding ground of Joseph R. Grundy and a hundred pale and soiled carbon copies. It was above the signature of one of these political stooges that the official order robbing several thousand residents of their farms and homes appeared in the last days of July. Nothing more than a form letter to inform the good people of the county that unless 1931 and 1932 back taxes, ranging around five, ten and fifteen dollars, were forthcoming their properties would be auctioned. Nobody seemed to know exactly how many were involved. I asked County Commissioner Roberts and he said, "God, I don't know. Quite a few."

"But, Commissioner, you who signed the order must certainly know."

"I'd say there was quite a few of them."

Then the Doylestown Intelligencer came out with the list. The farmers were given until Monday, August 6th, when the sale would take place at the courthouse. In the event that no one bid, the farms were to go into custody of the county.

On the same day 125 farmers met at Hagersville and decided to call a general meeting of both delinquent and paid-up farmers and workers to see what could be done. The meeting would be held August 1 on the courthouse steps. A committee of the United Farmers Protective Association sat up through the small hours, writing two thousand postcards to a partial list. That cost twenty dollars. There was no more money to be had.

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This organization ran off the first successful penny sale in the country. It has been fighting its way through hardy and resisting soil, but farmers look to it for leadership.

When we heard of the order I was working on the farm of Joe Tenin in Uhlerstown. Joe is a model farmer with one of the finest flocks of pullets in the state. No insurance company could ever complain of a burned barn on the Tenin place. He has been working that spot for twenty-four years and he doesn't owe a cent in taxes. But he is a member of the U.F.P.A. and his little car still runs. Every spare moment of the following week he spent going from township to local to isolated farmhouse, trying to assure the success of the Doylestown meeting.

Joe is a great, lusty farmer and he eats a lot and works a lot and sings all the time. Sometimes you see him stop for a breathing spell between the plowhandles and he'll start singing and before you know he's dancing there all by himself. Driving the little car in the night, we sang merry army songs and *Oh, Suzanna* and spirituals they could hear on the Jersey side. That was on the way to little gatherings all over the county. We never sang on the way back.

Those meetings. In Durham about a dozen of us sat on the porch of Joseph Herrmann. The electricity was turned off to save money and we sat in the dark. One man said he had shipped six hogs he'd fed from the day of their birth and they fetched him a check of nineteen cents after all expenses had been deducted. A broad man in overalls, squatting on the ground, said, "I'll be there. I learned my lesson. Next Thursday they're coming to sheriff my stove and bed and two hundred cans of fruit I preserved. Those are the only things left to sell."

That was John M. Ziegler. Joe had told me about him just the day before. Ziegler had been literally swindled out of his farm by the local feed company. Seventeen hundred dollars worth of his machinery was advertised to be "sheriffed" on a certain day and the U.F.P.A. offered to bring a group if he could gather some of his neighbors. No, Ziegler was a man who had brought up eight children honorably and he wanted everything legal. The machinery went for $21. For months he walked around telling his story to everybody he could collar. He even wrote it to the Farmers' National Weekly and they printed it. In the meantime the machinery had been carted off.

"I learned my lesson," he said. "If I can get a hitch, I'll be there."

In Red Hill nine of us sat in a low farm room under a fluttering kerosene lamp that had to be lit and relit. Three wide-eyed, scrawny kids stood in the doorway, listening. One man told how a horse had curled up on him with lockjaw the day after he bought it. The secretary of the local said:

"First picketing ever was seen in these parts, my sister was in it. There was twenty-five of them picketing that mill. So a fellow from the Business Men's Association comes to my place and he says, Your sister is picketing in town. I want you to order her off. I says, No I don't think I will. He says, You better. I says, Why? He says, You order her off or we're coming for you. I says, Come fast and come shooting because I got my guns oiled. He never put in a showing."

There is a Ku Klux Klan latent in the district, waiting for a chance to function. That same Business Men's Association has now a committee of vigilantes.

If you count five cents a mile for gas, oil, wear and tear on the engine, the Red Hill trip cost four dollars. You know what that means to a farmer. Yet every car available to the U.F.P.A. was running all week before the Doylestown meeting. Most of the people affected by the sale had no way of getting around. Even so, 350 of them came.

The chairman was Wilson Pitman, crippled veteran of the Spanish-American War, swindled out of his farm for a debt he was willing to pay. This is no fairy tale. Verify it. He opened the meeting and Waldbaum, the I.L.D. lawyer, got up with a heavy legal volume in his hand.

He said, "This is the law. Monday your farms and homes will be sold and legally you will have no kick coming. Unless you can stop this sale by determined resistance in the form of mass delegations and mass action you can say goodbye to your properties now."

Lewis Bentzley, farmer of Perkasie and president of the U.F.P.A., went up the courthouse steps and outlined the situation. He is a fiery and remarkable speaker. The crowd laughed and hooted with him. He proposed three large delegations, one to Judge Keller, one to the County Commission and one to Governor Pinchot. When he asked for volunteers, the crowd surged forward.

Next morning we returned to Doylestown and every man who had signed up for the delegations was there and we began our course in sociology. We went into the chambers of Judge Hiram Keller who was most obliging and extra-curricular. Bentzley had his say and the Judge said, Just a moment now, I'll look that up. It developed Judge Keller was scared stiff. He had several legal volumes turned to exactly the right page on his desk. He read a paragraph here and a sentence there and his hands fumbled and trembled. It was out of his jurisdiction, he finally said, the court had to be petitioned first by the County Commission. Would he act favorably on such a petition, we asked. Judge Keller was not at liberty to say.

We went to the County Administration Building, some twenty of us, and there too the corridors were filled with alarmed clerks and panicky stenographlets. The Commission was just consulting with its attorney to see whether it had the right to call off the sales. County Clerk Harvey said, would we please wait? Yes, we would, although it did seem strange that the Commissioners should be unfamiliar with the provisions of the law they had invoked against thousands of citizens.

So we waited. It was the height of the threshing season and the farmers were fidgety. For several days Joe had had to put off the transferring of his pullets from the coop into the chicken house and only that morning we had found two of them crushed to death in the congestion. Joe's hands hung from the straps of his overalls. After an hour's wait he said, They had enough time to talk it over, and he walked toward the conference room. The building supervisor said, You can't go in there, and Joe said, Go away, and opened the door into the room. County Clerk Harvey stood up and said, Come in, ladies and gentlemen, the Commission will see you now.

They sat on one side of the table and we stood on the other. Again Bentzley had his say and they sat through it without a sound, the two stooge commissioners and Chairman Roberts.

Roberts is a youngish, fat politician and when I say fat I don't mean stylishly stout or pleasingly plump. He is all of three hundred pounds. When he nods, his chin works like an accordion. But he didn't nod under Bentzley's lash. He said, "We have consulted with our attorney as to our powers in this matter and we have decided to adjourn the sales of the 1932 delinquents for one year, but the 1931 delinquents will have to go on."

"You're passing the buck," Bentzley said. "Judge Keller told us you had the right to adjourn both. Do you know that even so the sale affects 1,500 homesteads?"

"I know, but that's our decision."

The attorney said, "I suppose you men are aware that these sold-out farmers have the right to redeem their homes within two years by paying their taxes, interest and the expenses of this sale?"

"Meaning that men who can't get five dollars together now will have the privilege of paying the accumulated taxes, interest and expenses of two years," Bentzley said.

The Commission had nothing more to say.

We filed out. The adjournment had been at least a partial victory, but we thought if pressure has accomplished that much, additional pressure may force them to grant the remainder. We went to stencil and mimeograph a leaflet calling all to pack the courthouse on the day of the sale and compel adjournment for everybody. We were still at the stencil when a telegram from Governor Pinchot came in response to our protest wire: "Will see Bucks County delegation in effort to save homes and farms. Come Milford Sunday, 4 P M standard." Some of us there had already taken our freshman course in sociology. We went ahead with the leaflet.

Sunday four carloads started out. In the meantime the Bristol small home owners had a meeting, but their delegation was unable to get a car. It was a two hundred mile trip and there was one lizzie which you couldn't risk and its contents piled into the other cars. One Studebaker held eight people and swung on its springs like a beer sign. At the Delaware Water Gap we stopped for gas at a station which attracted trade by advertising a veteran who buried himself alive and swore to

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stay there until the bonus was paid. After that we saw several of these veterans advertised along the road.

As we turned into the Pinchot estate we asked two well-dressed little boys where the house was, and the elder sized us up and said, "You can't go in there."

"Yes, we can," I said.

"Not unless you have an appointment."

"We have an appointment."

Reluctantly he gave us the instructions. When we got out under the ivy walls of the fortress we were met by a group of young people just after their swim. We could see the pool glistening. They wore beach robes and white mufflers. The one with Andover and Princeton dripping from his voice said the Governor will be out shortly. Some of the men started detailing their complaints to him and he looked uncomfortable and said, "Yes indeed, how true."

Then Pinchot came out and conducted us past the reception room with its oak chests and Oriental vases and he was all honey too and so distinguished in his white flannels and white moustache. He and young Andover brought us garden chairs and set them around a remodeled millstone in the center of an impeccable lawn and the Governor shook hands with every mother's child of us and asked now just what was wrong.

Bentzley went over it again. Most of the Bristol people were living on relief. Here was a man who had sold both his workhorses to be able to meet the tax payment. What good was a farmer without his horses?

"Not much," Pinchot said.

The Governor was horrified at the smallness of the sums for which the 1,500 were losing their homes. He was in whole-hearted sympathy with those citizens. He was anxious for us to know that. He repeated it half a dozen times. It was the substance of his conversation. What does the Governor propose to do? The Governor will send telegrams to the County Commission and to ex-Senator Grundy. (Why to Grundy?) That's all the Governor can do.

"You could call martial law and stop the sales," someone in the back said.

"No, I couldn't do that," he replied.

"You certainly have the authority."

"The only time I ever called martial law was to protect a group of strikers in Western Pennsylvania," Governor Pinchot said. "I can't send the state troopers in there except in case of violence."

"Violence is likely if they try to go through with the sales."

"I have sworn an oath of office, young man. I would advise strongly against violence," he said sharply.

"The county will call in state troopers anyway."

"Oh no. I can guarantee you they won't. Now that is my department."

He took down the sums for which those present were delinquent. Joe Tenin said he'd paid up and the Governor was surprised to see him there. Joe said, "This organization has been accused of advising people against paying their taxes. I want you to know that those of us who can, do. But those who can't should not be made to lose their one means of livelihood."

"I am in whole-hearted sympathy with them," Pinchot said.

Joe's phraseology must have impressed the Governor, because on our way to Doylestown next morning we read the wire he had sent to Grundy in the Philadelphia Record: "I urge you most earnestly to exert your influence with the County Commissioners to save the farms and homes of these Bucks County people. The Governor has no power in this matter, but the Attorney General assures me there is full legal authority to put off this sale. It is by no such reason that American citizens should lose their homes and means of livelihood for such pitifully small sums. In the name of humanity this sale should be stopped at least until an effort can be made to secure Federal help."

I did not expect the farmers to make much of a showing in the courthouse that morning. The 1932 adjournment had accomplished its aim of splitting the ranks. For most of them it was impossible to get to Doylestown. And although they would have backed resistance to a sheriffing, physical eviction of the 1,500 families was two years off. At least Pinchot had promised there would be no state troopers.

The first thing we saw in Doylestown was a patrol of state troopers on the main street. I went into the courtroom and strung along the back aisle was a line of state troopers. They had long, lead-tipped riot sticks. I went into jury rooms and both were filled with plainclothesmen. The local cops lolled in the corridors. Everybody was worried.

Farmers filtered slowly into the courtroom. Some saw the set-up and went home. Five minutes before the sale was scheduled to start there weren't more than 150 farmers in the house. It would have been suicide to start anything. Someone popped a rubber band or something and every eye turned in his direction. One by one the dicks emerged from the jury room and seated themselves in the crowd.

I said to the side of beef who had the earmarks of a sergeant, "I'm from such and such a paper. Do you expect any trouble?"

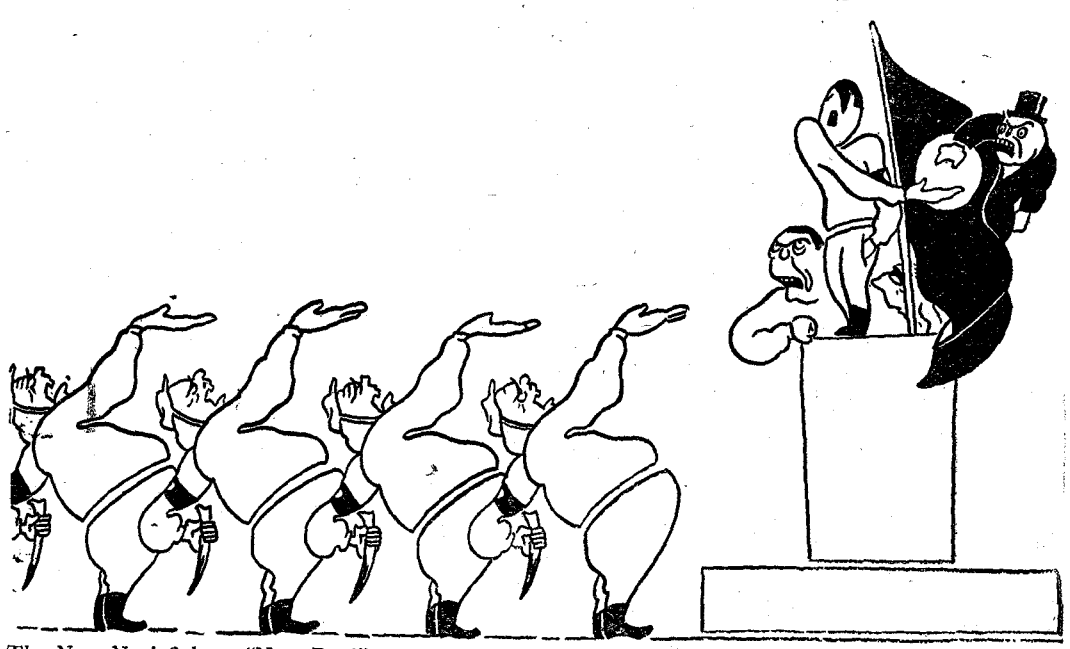
"Maybe. If anything happens, we go to work on that guy, see? He's the agitator."

I walked outside and saw a touring car pull up. Several people clustered around it and the driver chased them off. The car was full of ammunition. I came back to the court.

No one uttered a sound. The farmers already knew nothing could be done, but officials still expected trouble. God knows what they feared. A bomb, perhaps.

Finally the troopers tilted their sticks at a more menacing angle and the county people filed in—Landis, the crawling Treasurer, the Recorder, the Crier, the two stooge Commissioners and the mastodon Roberts. All around, lawyers. They mumbled, blustered, made an apologetic speech about misrepresentations and settled down to the business of the day. The recorder would read off a man's name, the sum he owed, then say, "SOLD, County Commissioners." Another man, standing behind him, would affix a stamp. 1,500 farms sold at the rate of ten a minute. Angelo, Ashton, Bennett, Boyer, Branniggan, Conway. . . .

When they were through, we scattered slowly and those of us who had been on the delegations met again on the lawn. They had shown their teeth and the farmers had seen their weakness, but they had seen their strength too. The thousands whose homes had been saved by the adjournment know they owe it to no one outside their own ranks and they know exactly how it had been accomplished. The physical eviction of the 1,500 families is scheduled for 1936. In the score of volunteers who participated in the delegations a corps of leaders sprang to the foreground. On the lawn I stood next to a tall boy with a tongue-twister of a name that I never could get. He had been on all the delegations, making us look small next to his six foot four. He said, "I learned more in this one week than I did in eight years of school."



The New Nazi Salute: "Now Pay!"

From Simplicus

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"... Bombs in the Sky"

HAROLD WARD

SPEAKING in November, 1932, as Chairman of the Committee of Imperial Defense, Acting Premier Stanley Baldwin had this to tell the House of Commons about aerial warfare: "I think it is well for the man in the street to realize that there is no power on earth that can protect him from being bombed, *whatever people tell him. The bomber will always get through.*" (Emphasis mine.) With admirable chivalry — and a weather eye cocked on the mounting profits of the airplane companies—the Premier went on to say that "the only defense is in offense, which means that you have got to *kill more women and children* more quickly than the enemy, if you want to save yourselves." In July of this year the citizens of London were treated to an air-raid in which the bombers "got through" to the extent of "destroying" seven vital points and scoring 29 other "hits," many of them in broad daylight, and in spite of the most vigilant defense. Simultaneously, the House of Lords approved the government's four-year air defense program involving the expenditure of $100,000,000—and Baldwin was smoothly declaring that "there is no cause at all for panic of any kind." In this astonishing statement he was supported by no less an "authority" than J. B. S. Haldane, whose profound knowledge of genetics does not prevent him from shrugging learned shoulders at the so-called "air menace." Another public-spirited scientist, Dr. F. A. Freeth, was telling a childishly alarmed London audience in February that the very best retort to an air-raid was for the citizens to rush, one and all, into suitably prepared hot baths, there to smoke pipes or cigarettes, and laugh until it was all over. Oddly enough, Dr. Freeth is chief research chemist for the Imperial Chemical Industries—whose colossal building was one of the seven strategic points utterly "destroyed" by one of the squadrons provided with bombs containing, no doubt, generous loads of his own stuff.

So much, and such incredible, nonsense is being broadcast about the supposed "harmlessness" of aero-chemical warfare, and that by so-called "responsible" authorities (including General H. L. Gilchrist, U.S. Chemical Warfare Service; Captain Liddell Hart, Major-General H. G. Bishop, U.S. Field Artillery; Captain W. Volkart, Germany; Major Leon A. Fox, U.S. Medical Corps, etc.) that a few equally authoritative counterblasts are in order. Let us begin at home, with a statement published in Army Ordnance (official journal of the Army Ordnance Association) by J. E. Zanetti, a Colonel in the Chemical Warfare Reserve of the United States Army. It is entitled *Thermite Incendiary Bombs* and was a reply to certain misleading remarks in an article by Captain Liddell Hart. Pointing out that the thermite bomb is "essentially an intimate mixture of aluminum powder and iodide of iron" the ignition of which will produce the appalling temperature of 5,400 degrees Fahrenheit (half that of the sun's surface), sufficient to burn everything it touches, and even, in small droplets, instantly to penetrate steel helmets, Colonel Zanetti states that:

> A fleet of some fifty bombers capable of carrying twenty one hundred-pound bombs each and allowing 10 percent effective hits, could start almost simultaneously 100 very serious fires and give the best organized fire department a Herculean task to cope with. *And wind, the enemy of the gas attack, would here be a most helpful ally.* (Emphasis mine: apologists of gas warfare are constantly using the wind as an argument against its dangers.)

Bear in mind that thermite bombs require no explosive bombs to initiate their reaction, and that they may be dropped by planes flying in dispersed formation over a city, with the double advantage of scattering the enemy attack and (still more vital) *scattering the fires.* Small wonder that a well-informed French military observer, quoted by Zanetti, said, "We are not afraid of a gas attack on Paris by airplanes . . . But the thermite bomb would be far more dangerous. A hundred fires started in a short time at widely separated points might have appalling consequences."

Significantly enough, another Frenchman, General Pouderoux, former Chief of the Paris Fire Department, declared (in a criticism of the 20,000,000-franc appropriation for the defense of Paris against air-raids) that the one sure defense against such attacks would be *complete evacuation* of the bombed area. Masks — which have been shown to reduce physiological efficiency by about 25 percent—would be utterly useless against fire; and if the conditions were favorable to straight chemical attack (by gases of whose composition no one is yet aware), prolonged or repeated, no mask could be worn long enough at a stretch to *ensure physical* survival. As for "gas shelters," some of the most virulent compositions are liquids which flow to the lowest point, and they are lethal in easily maintained concentrations. (*Lewisite,* one of the deadliest gases known, and an American discovery, will saturate a cubic foot of air in quantities ranging from 0.1 to 6 grains, according to temperature. For *mustard gas*—the German "Yellow Cross" — the proportions are less; and for *chlor-picrin,* a virulent lung-irritant, the "endurance concentration" is 15 parts in one million.)

Let us listen to another American authority, Fred H. Wagner, Colonel in the Ordnance Reserve, U.S. Army. Writing on *Gas Defense* in the latest issue of Army Ordnance Colonel Wagner bitterly scores all the so-called "peace societies" for their sentimental and utterly futile minimizing of war dangers. Following a very detailed technical analysis of the nature of the best known poison gases, he comments briefly on the effects of some of them. *Chlorine* and its compounds destroy lung tissue, and recent improvements slow down the action, rendering its presence less quickly detectable. *Mustard gas* — and the "vesicants" generally—operates with a subtle delayed action; the presence of moisture intensifies the agony it causes: it "kills slowly, but surely, every substance which boasts of life." *Hydrocyanic acid,* a recent discovery "causes immediate death when present in even minute quantities," as do also bromides and iodides of cyanogen. *Cyanogen* and *chloride* compounds are equally lethal. Irritants in the form of fine powder and dust—German "Blue Cross" compounds—penetrate the finest masks, causing their removal, thus permitting "Green" and "Yellow" Cross vapors to do their deadly work. In addition to straight bombing and smoke attacks, Colonel Wagner has something to say of "liquid rain." "Spraying, or rain" offers "a means for poisoning the terrain ahead of advancing troops, when towns, valleys, fields of growing grain, and the tops of trees may be saturated with mustard gas by planes during the night." 650 grains per square yard of the gas would suffice, and a squadron of fifty planes, each with a 5,000 lb. load, could effectively desolate an area of one square mile. The addition of deodorizing chemicals will add to the horror of the attack—which, if directed to a congested section of London, Paris, Berlin, Lyons (Goering's chief French objective) or New York, would swiftly expose the criminal folly of the scientists, technicians, soldiers and statesmen who now so blandly whitewash the dangers of aero-chemistry in the next war.

And what shall be said of bacteriological warfare, secret German plans for which have been disclosed by Wickham Steed, and whose possibilities were seriously appraised by "General X" in his *Berlin Diaries?* What of the rapid improvements in airplane performance and load-carrying capacity, of "bomb-propellers" and "silencers" to reduce the audibility of the machines? of new gases like cacodyl-isocyanide and that mysterious chemical discovered by Professor Leonce Bert "while working on a preparation of perfumes"? And what sort of "coincidence" is it that, at a time of unparalleled economic depression and war hysteria, the chemical industries in every "civilized" country in the world are working overtime?

To these questions Premier Stanley Baldwin has supplied two neatly contradictory answers. You have your choice. Death is on the wing. . ..

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Correspondence

Soviet Writers Congress

To The New Masses:

The Congress of Soviet Writers opens definitely August 15, at 6 P. M. Gorky will open the Congress. They expect more than 500 writers to attend. Foreign writers are coming too. Willie Bredel is here. Plivier has been reading sections of a new book to the German comrades in preparation for the Congress. Gergel, Hungarian revolutionary writer, has come to the Congress from a collective somewhere in Mongolia. Tretyakov will be in Moscow soon. Sholokhov, author of *And Quiet Flows the Don* is coming, I hear.

Planned as part of a preparation for the Congress, an exhibition of more than 10,000 books arranged in 13 sections will open in the Park of Culture and Rest in a few days. One of these sections will be devoted to Gorky, books, photographs, portraits, etc. Another section will be devoted to Soviet literature of the "military Communism" period. About one-third of the exhibition will be taken up with the section devoted to the literature of the national republics.

Moscow. Ben Field.

Preparing Mass Murders

To The New Masses:

The drought, increasing unemployment, strikes and general unrest throughout the Middle West is reflected in the rapid motorization of the National Guards. On August 9, the Chicago Daily News reported of goings-on at Camp Grant near Rockford: "While staff officers of the 33rd division, Illinois National Guard, waited for word that might cause the dispatch of militiamen to the scene of strike troubles in Pekin, preparations were going on for the motorization of the 33rd division with the arrival of a consignment of sixty Chevrolet trucks today. . . . These are the first delivery of a National Guard order of 1,663 trucks that are expected to add to the mobility and speed of army divisions throughout the nation, according to Major-General Roy D. Keehn, commander of the 33rd division." Major-General Keehn's statement was borne out by the fact that only recently the Iowa National Guard, among others, was equipped with sixty of the latest special-built trucks which, according to the excuse of Adjutant-General Grahl, were merely furnished by the National Guard Bureau of the United States army to replace antiquated equipment in use by the guard since the World War.

The Illinois National Guard is receiving particular attention, due to the belief prevalent in many quarters in and about Chicago that while Capital and Labor in the city, by a sort of tacit agreement, have foresworn all major hostilities until after the closing of the World's Fair, the effect is very much like screwing down the valves on a boiler already at the high pressure point. Some workers predict that the Chicago struggle, when it splits wide open, will be a repetition of the general strike in San Francisco.

That, in any event, the moguls of Chicago are worried over the situation is evident. For one thing, they are making excellent use of the World's Fair as a convenient "cover" for displaying the state's military strength, secretly hoping, no doubt, that the workers of the Windy City will be sufficiently impressed. The events leading up to what the Chicago newspapers hailed as the greatest military spectacle staged there since the days of the World War are significant. At Camp Grant, August 9, tons of TNT were exploded by the 108th Engineers in a demonstration of modern demolition warfare before a committee of officials representing the Commonwealth Edison Company, the Illinois Central and the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific Railroad, the Chicago Surface Lines and the People's Gas Company. The following Monday, speaking before a Governor's day audience of more than 50,000 visitors, Gov. Henry Horner characterized the citizen army as "a guard against communism and violence." The next day, after a fortnight of intensive maneuverings in sham warfare, the training of 10,000 militiamen was climaxed by breaking camp and marching in diverging columns to form a giant fan fifteen miles broad and thirty miles long, invading Chicago and nucleating at the pup-tent camp on Chicago's lake front. On Illinois day, August 17, the 10,000 National Guardsmen paraded in full regalia down Michigan boulevard through the Avenue of Flags on the grounds of a Century of Progress. Military planes flew overhead in various formations. In the evening sham battles were staged on the lake and in the city, followed by creating the illusion of a wartime city under an air raid.

While the exhibit undoubtedly impressed myriads of World's Fair visitors from all over the world, it should not discourage the workers and anti-war intellectuals of Chicago, for they have an opportunity *par excellence* to exert all their influence in helping to make the 2nd U. S. Congress Against War and Fascism to be held in Chicago, September 28-29-30, a mighty counter-demonstration.

Fred Hammann.

Pekin, Ill.

It Happened in Ambridge

To The New Masses:

It happened in Ambridge, the semi-feudal town of the steel barons. Eleven men, constituting all those present at an I.L.D. membership meeting, were arrested for "unlawful assembly—next to riot" in the words of the chief of police. We came prepared to defend the men on the basis of constitutional guarantees for freedom of speech only to find a last-minute frame-up charge of disorderly conduct for ejecting some unknown and unproduced person from the meeting hall. One of the attorneys, a Negro sympathizer, was discriminated against by not being permitted to question witnesses until he had produced proof of his right to practice law in addition to his business cards—although I was not required to do so. After the police had put in their flimsy case on hearsay evidence, the burgess pondered, admitting openly that there was little evidence on which to convict. But he proceeded to question the defendants: "Who was chairman of the meeting? How many officers do you have? Who are they?" At this fascist attempt to gain information with which to terrorize these I.L.D. members, we protested that the names of officers have no connection with sustaining a charge of disorderly conduct and that such questions should not be answered. To this demand, came the lightning response of a sentence by the court: $5 fine for each defendant.

The case having been disposed of, the burgess waxed oratorical and announced that the conviction was brought on the men themselves because they defied him and persisted in holding meetings which the burgess said could not be held. When questioned why not by the defense counsel he said viciously: "Because *I* say so!" It was then called to his attention that there was no borough ordinance prohibiting inside meetings—did this stop him? He blandly and unconcernedly said, unconscious of the humor: "We've got such a law somewhere in this town. Maybe it's lost or mislaid, but I'm sure we've got a law."

Sylvia Schlesinger.

Pittsburgh.

Fascism at Cornell

[We have received a copy of a letter of protest, signed by more than one hundred persons who attended the lecture of Dr. Elfrieda E. Pope, newly apointed instructor in Hunter College, who spoke at Goldwin-Smith Hall, Cornell University, August 14, on her observations in East Prussia and the Polish Corridor. The protest was sent to Dr. R. H. Jordan, dean of the summer session. It follows in part.—The Editors.]

The speaker, who has just been appointed an instructor in Hunter College, New York City, was introduced by the chairman, a member of the German Department of Cornell University, who stated that the lecture would be of a non-controversial nature.

That this description was far off the mark is clear from an examination of her treatment of the material:

1. Dr. Pope spoke in the most glowing terms of the titled proprietors of East Prussia, better known as the Junkers. She emphasized their sad plight and was awed before their aristocratic graciousness. Dr. Pope regretted that she was unable to visit "lovely" Neudeck, the estate of Field Marshal von Hindenburg, but neglected to mention that the late Reichspresident had been bribed with that estate by her genial hosts in order that they might continue their depredations on this fund.

   Her expressed friendliness and admiration for the German Land League is particularly significant in view of the fact that this league is a Bund of the Junkers and is the agency through which they carried out their schemes.
2. Dr. Pope was fervent when she spoke of the Hitler Boys and, "as we call them," Hitler Girls. That these organizations are the embodiment of Nazi philosophy, that they were led to exult in the "Burning of the Books," that they have been inculcated with the perverse anthropology of Nordic and Aryan supremacy, that they are being prepared for war, these facts were conspicuously absent from her lecture.
3. The speaker rose to ebullience when she dealt with the Arbeitdienst, the "voluntary" labor camps, which are notoriously forced labor camps and one of the means by which the Hitler regime doctors its unemployment figures. These camps are a means for the militarizing of the German unemployed.
4. Dr. Pope concluded with an appeal for tourist trade in Germany. Here she was openly the propagandist because world sentiment is boycotting German goods and German touring. Thus the lady used her opportunity to appeal for economic support for the Nazi regime.

This was one of a series of Tuesday evening lectures given for the enlightenment of the students at the summer session and held under University auspices at Goldwin-Smith Hall. Yet here we heard a lecture that was clearly designed to arouse sympathy for a discredited and brutal regime.

We saw a charming young lady used as the mouthpiece of corrupt Junkerdom and bestial Hitlerism.

We protest the misuse of University property and prestige to develop support for the Hitler government.

Notice

Will the people who paid for subscriptions at the Edward Dahlberg meeting at Camp Unity, August 10, please communicate with The New Masses business office. Some of the names taken by Phil Bard were lost.

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Daniel Boone Belongs to Us

MICHAEL GOLD

IT IS only a few short years in America since the concept of a "proletarian litterateur" was a shabby rebel starving in a lonesome furnished room. The well-fed critics, when the name of that bitter young man was mentioned, denied his very existence. They exorcised him with a few drops of scented sacred water of Art, muttered the holy names of T. S. Eliot or Bendetto Croce, and returned to their comfortable round of publishers' teas and literary market gossip.

Today, the respectable critics are in a state of jitters. No other word can describe their condition. The crude upstart whom they had snubbed so carefully has not starved to death, but has grown lusty and important, instead. He poisons their day dreams; he looms above all their puny gods. They find him hiding in every batch of current books that arrives from a publisher. They smell his spoor through the pages of nearly every periodical. They must take account of him, and find answers to the cruel questions he is forever propounding.

So that, where formerly they could brush him off with a light bon mot, today some of them are disturbed enough to hate him. Yes, it is the real thing now—senile hatred of a most surprising intensity, an emotion one had never expected to discover in such neutral "liberal" breasts. The literary section of the Sunday New York Times might be named specifically as one of the choice examples of the newer literary spirit. Week by week, this curious museum of reaction adds to its specimens. Its white-guard Russian expert has shot down, by now, at least a hundred Soviet novels, its crew of renegade Socialists have disposed of all American fictioneers suspected of the Soviet rabies, and Mr. J. Donald Adams, curator-general, has recently distinguished himself by evolving a strategy of anti-proletarian defense that is really not as new as he thinks, for, as any historian might tell him, it first sprang from the brain of Mussolini.

It seems that a young twenty-two-year-old poet from Iowa, a tame, handsome college youth of the Rhodes scholar standard named Paul Engle, has published a slender book of verse. Fluent and charming, these poems contain nothing stronger than the lemonade brewed every year in the wide-flung college literary courses of the land. Effeminate young college poets have always done this sort of minor diddling, and Mr. Adams has usually disposed of them like every other busy editor —he has buried them with a few lines of faint encouragement.

But this boy's little piece received the leading review of the week, a full page of formidable gush written by no less a person than Ye Olde Editor himself. And Why? The mystery is plain; the poem, though concocted by a member of the younger generation, and therefore, by all the lights, one that should have been poisoned and crackling with revolt, was instead a bugle call for a new American patriotism. It wistfully described the prairies; it bragged of the Rocky Mountains; it went into blurry parlor ecstasies over the grand old hardy pioneers; and it called on the youth to forget all this modern rubbish, and to return to the spirit of those pioneers.

Banal and literarious in style, as void of concrete meaning as the sermon of a Southern village Baptist, this cream-puff poem managed to floor Mr. Adams for the full count. He hailed it as a portent, as nothing less than the dawn of a new renaissance. The younger generation was through with whoring after the proletarian gods, and was returning to the Jehovah of its pioneer fathers; Paul Engle was another Walt Whitman, the revolution was defeated, etc., etc., and etc.

Mr. Adams, of course, is a naïve and even ignorant reactionary, or he might have known that Archibald MacLeish had struck a similar note a few years ago, and that the innocent Mr. Paul Engle had even quietly paraphrased a few of MacLeish's strongest lines. And Mr. Adams seemed to forget that recently there have been coming forth quite a number of novels by young writers, based on American history, and falsifying it for the same patriotic ends. Then there is the movement among painters in search of what they call the American tradition, led by such agitators as Thomas Benton. Really, Mr. Adams could have made a powerful case for his reactionary dream had he been aware of all this movement in the arts, instead of resting his thesis on the frail shoulders of a single college punk.

Capitalism, in its last stage of corruption, has the cunning of a hunted weasel. It throws out a hundred false scents, develops a myriad of disguises to defend itself. This shallow Americanism in the arts is one of the camouflages of capitalism, and nothing more. The bourgeois youth of Italy were led into the same historic trap by Mussolini, as were the youth of Germany by Hitler. The mythical glories of a golden age in the past are made to serve as a fortress blocking the march of a socialist future. The Rocky Mountains are used as an argument against those who agitate for unemployment insurance; Daniel Boone is utilized as a symbol to crush those "alien" forces that would bring a living wage to Boone's coal miner descendents in Kentucky and Tennessee; and the grim heroism of the pioneers, driven by economic necessity ever westward, these very proletarians of the American past are used with an amazing effrontery to defeat their proletarian brothers struggling against the same enemy in the present. It is significant that no poet or painter in this newly emerging "nationalist" school ever permits himself to study American history.

Yes, this school of art cannot use the historic truth in their fantasies, for as Barbusse has well said, today "truth is revolutionary." What is worse about these artists, is their attitude toward the present. In this poem of the young Engle, there is much vague rhetoric describing the author's deep and soulful love of America. But it is an abstraction he loves, to which has been added the aforesaid Rocky Mountains. Has this great lover ever examined America? Does he know that the vast majority of the American people, workers, farmers, small business men, Negroes and children, are living in bitter anxiety and need today? And does he know why? And does he care? His poem makes no mention of this basic America; the lover evidently considers the American landscape more important and spiritual than the American people. Yes, he loves so "spiritually" that he can ignore and even disguise from himself and others the horrible truth that the object of his worship really needs a job and a square meal.

This is not patriotism, but treason. It is the typical upper-class treason to the basic human mass that one has always perceived in their philosophy, statecraft, economics and literature. Let us say it boldly to these traitors: only a social revolutionary can really love his land. He loves it so much that he is willing to give his life that its people may have life in abundance. He loves this strong and beautiful American earth too well to have it populated by exploiters and slaves. He demands something better for his native country than this commercial plutocratic hell that befouls it. He wants a nation of free and creative human beings, a super-race from whom the fear of hunger has been removed forever. This current America of war and hunger and corruption doesn't satisfy him, as it does the traitors. He sees a better America than that visioned by the Ku Klux Klan.

And a last word to Mr. Adams: your nationalist school of art can never succeed. The fascist barbarians may make some headway here shooting down strikers, whipping Negroes and Jews, and otherwise carrying your philosophy into life; but your artists will always be as sterile as their brothers who work for Hitler and Mussolini. Nothing can be built on a lie. That is the strength of the proletarian writers; they build on the truth, on the strikes, hunger marches, revolts against tyranny and war, and the fight for Communism that are the only history of our time. And Daniel Boone, the proletarian, belongs in our ranks, not in yours, you men of Wall St.

American Song: A Book of Poems, by Paul Engle. Doubleday, Doran. $1.75.

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Books

Germs of Frustration

GRAMMAR OF LOVE, by Ivan Bunin. Smith & Haas. $2.
CORPORAL TUNE, by L. A. G. Strong. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.
DUSK AT THE GROVE, by Samuel Rogers. Little, Brown & Co. $2.50.
SLIM, by William Wister Haines. Little, Brown & Co. $2.50.

JOHN HOWARD LAWSON, in his contribution to the "Authors' Field Day" in the recent quarterly of NEW MASSES, pointed out that most bourgeois novels are very much alike and that "the news that another writer of fiction has written *another* story of middle-class decay is not especially revealing or important." It is impossible, of course, to disagree with him, and yet a simple assertion of that sort scarcely solves the problems of THE NEW MASSES' book review section. On the one hand, since the section tries to survey the whole field of books, it cannot ignore the novels to which pages are being devoted in the bourgeois press. Our readers presumably want to know what these books are about, why they seem significant to bourgeois reviewers, and why they have little importance for us. On the other hand, it is impossible, if we are to have space enough for the books that we do find important, to give each of these bourgeois novels a long review, "to isolate the particular germ of frustration," as Lawson suggests, "to show the author's *special* relation to bourgeois currents of thought."

So far as I can see, the only practical solution of this difficulty is to give long reviews only to a very few of these novels, the most representative and the most revealing, and to review the others as briefly as possible. One way of handling them is to give them unsigned brief reviews. The other way is to take them in groups. We shall continue to employ the former method, but I think that we shall use the latter method more in the future than we have in the past. Not only does it take care of the problem of space; it may serve to bring to readers of THE NEW MASSES the cumulative impression of decay that the extensive reading of bourgeois fiction produces on the revolutionary critic.

Certainly *Grammar of Love* is a perfect case study in futility. It is a book of short stories by a Russian emigré, who had lived for years in undistinguished obscurity until, for rather obvious political reasons, he was awarded the Nobel prize. Of the ten tales here collected, two, *A Simple Peasant* and *On the Great Road,* belong to pre-revolutionary Russia, and they are the only two that have any merit. That merit, such as it is, derives from the fact that, before the revolution, Bunin regarded the peasants from a comfortable position of unquestioned superiority to them. He could unflinchingly portray their brutality, for he felt himself completely removed from their lives. He could even sympathize with them, as one can safely sympathize with whip-broken beasts. Bunin's callous acceptance of squalor and brutality is repellent, but one feels in the stories a limited kind of accuracy. When he wrote them, neither fear of the peasantry nor any sense of responsibility for its fate disturbed Bunin, and he could and did record the more superficial aspects of its life.

But the world has changed, and Bunin's security has gone. The three constant ingredients of his post-revolutionary work are nostalgia for the Czarist past, hatred for the Soviet regime, and an eagerness to find refuge in romantic trivialities. His neurotic bitterness against the Soviet regime appears in *Comrade Dozorny,* which is so violent as to seem almost a burlesque of all anti-Soviet fiction. His nostalgia reveals itself in little details of *Sunstroke* and *Ida,* and all the stories in the book, except the two early ones, are devoted to sentimental trifles. Even at his best, Bunin was far from first-rate, but the conditions that made his best work possible have vanished, and only a very poor second-best is left.

L. A. G. Strong, Anglo-Irish poet, novelist, critic, and anthologist, has told in *Corporal Tune* the story of the last weeks of a man with a fatal disease. Although both Proust and Mann have portrayed the psychological implications of sickness, I can think of no author who has shown the part that illness and the threat of illness play in the average life. Certainly Mr. Strong has no interest in anything so gross as the economic causes and effects of disease. His hero, Ignatius Farrelly is a successful author, with no worries about the cost of medical attention or the fate of his dependents. Furthermore, Ignatius has recently lost his wife and consequently his will to live. Thanks to these two assumptions, Mr. Strong is permitted to concentrate on Ignatius' observations of his surroundings, his analyses of his own sentiments, and his semi-mystical reflections on death. The result is a "kind grave very sorry" book, like Mr. Garfield's reading voice in *The 42nd Parallel,* of no possible importance except to literary club women who seek their occasion for a good cry on a higher level than Bess Streeter Aldrich.

Samuel Rogers, whose *Dusk at the Grove* won him the Atlantic's $10,000 prize, is an American schoolteacher. Though this is his first novel, he has the polished literary manners of a professional vendor of pseudo-profundities. It is the story of the disintegration of a family, a process that Mr. Rogers, in common with a great many other novelists, seems to regard as fascinating and completely mysterious. The War and a bad marriage ruined Dicky, and Brad became another of these frustrated business men, and Linda got a divorce, and finally the Grove, which is the family place at Newport, had to be sold to help Brad out of the depression. And that is that, except that Linda, for no good reason, still has faith in life, and Mr. Rogers, for the very good reason that he has just won $10,000, ought to have.

To contrast these three books with William Wister Haines' *Slim* is to see the enormous difference between the frustration and despair of bourgeois fiction and the potential vitality of working-class literature. *Slim* is not a very good novel; it is certainly not a revolutionary novel; but it is a lively, first-hand record of a workingman's experience. One of the many advantages of proletarian writers, as this book, with all its defects, suggests, is the freshness of their material. They don't live in a world in which everything has been said before and the only chance of originality is in finding a new way of saying something. This story of linemen, by a man who has been a lineman for seven years, humanizes a large sector of life that for most of us is completely blank. And it shows that there are, even among non-class-conscious workers, many of the elements of a true culture, a warm solidarity, a body of traditions, a code of ethics. Mr. Haines has not idealized his workers, but you feel that there is something strong and healthy in their way of life.

I have said that *Slim* is not a very good novel. Mr. Haines unfolds the story with a simplicity that is almost mechanical, describing Slim's apprenticeship as a helper, then introducing an adventure, describing Slim's experiences in the Southwest with an adventure thrown in, describing the death of Slim's friend Red, describing Slim's love affair, describing Slim at work on the electrification of a railroad. The conversation is frequently lit up by magnificent phrases of linemen's jargon, but the narrative style is consistently banal. The details of the job, though extremely illuminating, are often difficult to comprehend; an adroit novelist could have smoothed the reader's path by more judicious selection.

I have also said that *Slim* is not a revolutionary novel, and that is not the least important reason for its relative ineffectiveness. The central theme of the novel is the workman's pride in his own independence and in the difficulties and dangers of his job. That is all to the good; we need to realize that the worker, exploited though he is, is not a cowed slave. But it is impossible, even for the naïve and hopeful Mr. Haines, to describe independence and craftsman's pride as if they had no economic foundation. Towards the end of the book he comes to the depression, the dropping of electrification projects, and the consequent unemployment of Slim and thousands of his fellow linemen. What are these jobless linemen to do? Mr. Haines knows that their pride and independence will make gangsters of many of them, but he also knows that this is neither a personal nor a social solution. What is the alternative? Mr. Haines calmly dodges. Slim escapes marriage, and by study

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and hard work is able to get along. It is a solution that could only work for one lineman out of a thousand, and Mr. Haines knows it.

It is not merely the lame ending, however, that indicates what a revolutionary attitude might have given Mr. Haines. That is merely a symptom of a lack of understanding of forces that are as much a part of linemen's lives and as much a menace to those lives as the voltages that pass through their wires. Without that understanding, *Slim* tells only half the story, but it tells that half effectively, and it suggests that our revolutionary writers would do well to remember the freshness, the drama, and the human value of work as well as the causes and the necessity of revolt. It also suggests that even a fifty-fifty proletarian has an edge these days on the average bourgeois. GRANVILLE HICKS.

The Frightened Physicists

THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE UNIVERSE, by W. F. G. Swann. Macmillan. $3.75.

When, as to our only resource, we turn to such a work as this for the contemporary explanation of the inscrutable universe, we are deceived beyond all endurance. The deception practised by those experts in pure physics who have written similar works is so unanimous, and so consistently of the same kind, that there is good reason to wonder whether the scientific method is not an even shoddier delusion than any of its predecessors, than any of the phantasies reared in the infancy of the race. Such pessimism, however, can not be sincerely sustained, for the results of the scientific method are too many, too real, too revolutionary, and too fruitful. We are obliged, in the face of such antitheses, to seek the reason for our deception at the hands of science's priestcraft in the persons of the priests themselves. And there, indeed, the reason awaits.

The deliberate and miserable deception which Swann, Eddington, Millikan, Compton, and almost all other genuinely gifted physicists, promote, lies in their bending of the so-called new physics to buttress, nay, to justify, infantilisms like god, and immortality, and free will. In such theological and philosophical realms, one is entitled to assume, the scientist should be mute, if not disdainful. That is not the case. Instead, with an eagerness similar to desperation, they explain our new knowledge in terms of the old. It is no longer possible to believe them to be innocent actors in such a travesty, and it is time, it is imperative, that their motives be laid bare. It is no longer possible to believe they are innocent victims of the so-called time lag, that disgusting interval which, in the past, has separated the discovery of new truth from its application. There are, it is true, some ameliorating, human, considerations, and of these I will take notice later. But that crime is too great, too dangerous, to be condoned by sympathy for human frailty. Their crime is loss of courage, and from this cowardice comes intellectual dishonesty.

Let us consider this Swann, this Englishman who has been the chief of the physics division of the Carnegie Institution's department of terrestrial magnetism, who has been professor of physics at Yale and the University of Chicago, and who, since 1927, has been the director of the Bartol Research Foundation of the Franklin Institute of Philadelphia, where only the most advanced problems of theoretical and mathematical physics are considered.

His book is designed to inform the laity of how the universe seems to one who understands the general and special relativity theories and the theories of quanta and other atomic hypotheses. The purpose is important, his method of illustration is trivial and unsatisfactory. This can be excused, but what can not be forgiven are such statements as this: "Death would constitute, as it were, the master discontinuity or group of discontinuities, following which the history of the organism would go on according to the ordinary continuous laws of physics without the occurrence of any further discontinuities of the kind under discussion. Mathematical physics," he explains, "presents no fundamental obstacle to going to heaven."

The discontinuities to which he alludes are sudden, inexplicable breaks in the chain of cause and effect. Planck, discoverer of the great theory of quanta, explicitly warned against assuming that, because atomic behavior seems at present in certain phases to be discontinuous, everything in the universe is haphazard. Planck was aware that what seems discontinuous may later prove to be controlled by factors now imperceptible to the human senses. But the majority of pure physicists have not been deterred. Marching behind Heisenberg's principle of indeterminacy, which itself should be confined to atomic behavior, or rather to the current hypotheses of atomic behavior, they have engaged in a field day of probabilities, and have refurbished old animistic and vitalisitic philosophies ad lib. Swann is actually led to declare that cancer may be caused by the sudden advent of discontinuity into the cellular processes, by a visitation, as it were, not of the devil, but of what the vitalists call "new initial conditions."

Let us turn from such drivel to a consideration of the truly great and revolutionary generalization which is the valid and permanent contribution of the so-called new (mathematical) physics. It is an epistemological conception that promises a greater approximation to reality than man has ever achieved. It involves a complete reorientation of the ways in which we regard the behavior of matter, living and inert, of the ways in which we think about "events" throughout the universe. This, indeed, is the hypothesis with which pure physicists should be concerned when they forsake experimentation for explanation. And the very thing from which they now shy away.

To the query, "What is reality?" philosophy has always answered, "It depends on the point of view of the observer." This has been no mere evasion. It has been a legitimate expression of a truth. Like all honesties it contains an intimation of the way out of the dilemma. The real import of the theories of relativity and quantum mechanics provides the solution of this dilemma.

The behavior (and hence some of the nature) of matter is more accurately perceived not by the individual man, or any collection of men, but by interrelationships of matter and motion, by descriptions of matter without relation to man, in a new frame of reference, in which man has no part. It involves, of course, a further elimination of anthropomorphism, of man's immemorial propensity for seeing himself, and his pathetic little purposes, in all that he witnesses, and in everything he tries to explain.

Why, in the face of the need for and inevitability of such a revolution in thinking, are our pure scientists bewildered, and, what is even worse, militantly regressive? It is because the pure scientist, like all men, fears the unfamiliar, and quails at the very prospect of forsaking man as arbiter. It is because the pure scientist sees in this new epistemology a further liquidation of the individual, fears for his own ego, and for the rugged individualists who have endowed the laboratories. It is because the pure scientist, both consciously and subconsciously, under capitalism, *desires* to support the myths by which the exploited are enslaved. It is because the pure scientist is of less importance to the contemporary world than the revolutionist and the economist. He mopes for his erstwhile preeminence in the historical perspective. He is also lonely and turns to the dupes of our ancient superstitions, whom he once despised.

It is because the pure scientist is ignorant of, when he is not hostile toward, the world changes that have followed the inventions which make internationalism and collectivism inevitable. Aware of a significant change, he does not participate, and thereby paralyzes his creativity, and piddles, like Swann, about God and immortality. It is because the pure scientist knows, even though he doesn't admit, that there is more knowledge to *assimilate* than there are minds to do it, since almost all human time and energy are consumed in the daily murder of each other which living under capitalism requires. It is because the pure scientist, the most creative of the human animals, has lost his self-confidence, for there is no mass espousal, no collective drive, no real sustenance for him under capitalism. And it is because the pure scientist knows, but will not believe, that the blight of capitalism can be wiped out in revolution, and that soon, all over the world, countless human beings will be devoting their energy to solving the mysteries of our brief life. HENRY HART.

Can Jeffers Learn?

ROBINSON JEFFERS: THE MAN AND HIS WORK, by Lawrence C. Powell. The Primavera Press. $3.50.

Among non-revolutionary poets there is one who, in the opinion of the reviewer, merits

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the adjective great—Robinson Jeffers. Mr. Powell, who keenly but not blindly admires his poetry, has written a study of Jeffers that is sound in substance and in tone, well documented, informative, and unpedantic. It is, however, weak on the side of sociological criticism. For all its striking originality of thought and expression, Jeffers' work is recognizably a product of personal situations brought about or made possible by the social-economic structure of this period and place.

Jeffers has been the most eloquent poetic spokesman of the aloof pessimism of the educated bourgeois, variety *rentier*. He repudiates society, the ugly grinding society that has everywhere developed with industrial production, as administered for the benefit of private owners. But he has not known how to remake that society. In a letter Powell quotes, he says: "I don't think industrial civilization is worth the distortion of human nature and the meanness and loss of contact with the earth that it entails. I think your Marxist industrialized Communism . . . would be only a further step in a bad direction. It would entail less meanness but equal distortion and would rot people with more complete security." And in a recent lyric poem he asked,

> Is it so hard for men to stand by themselves,
> They must hang on Marx or Christ, or mere progress?

Obviously Jeffers understands neither the aims of Communism nor the body of rigorously based and purposeful revolutionary theory that is called, for convenience, after the name of one of its great founders. It comes with something of a shock to realize not only that he does not understand Communism but also that his own philosophy is so cramped and rigid and inadequate. Powell has done a fine job in classifying and interpreting Jeffers' ideas, and their barrenness becomes perfectly clear. One sees how a stultifying and unsocial pattern of thought can impair or cancel out even such tremendous technical ability and dramatic power as Jeffers has. That is, of course, why the more recent of his novels-in-poetry seem of no great moment.

Because he is a master and an honest poet, Jeffers illustrates the blind alley situation of the artist who has repudiated the diseased and hollow culture of the dominant class but has not found his way to the forces fighting for the future. Such an artist remains bound by an umbilical cord to an expiring social organism. Instead of vital nourishment, his connection feeds him gall and poison.

As the conflict between classes grows more acute, looking the other way ceases to be a solution even of personal problems; in fact, it becomes impossible. That breathlessly beautiful sanctuary, Carmel-by-the-Sea, is now infested with repression and terrorism like the rest of the Pacific coast. Two hundred vigilantes are organized and armed to "keep down" radicals. The John Reed Club is threatened.

Which way will Jeffers turn? Some time ago he began a poem with these lines:

> While this America settles in the mould of its vulgarity heavily thickening to empire,
> And protest, only a bubble in the molten mass,
> pops and sighs out and the mass hardens. . . .

By now he must see that protest is not a mere expiring bubble in the mass, but a powerful, growing ferment among the masses—a boiling effervescence that will break the mould in struggles worthy of the pen and powers of Robinson Jeffers or any major poet.

HERBERT A. KLEIN.

Dictator for a Day

ROBERT FORSYTHE

WHEN the Four Marx Brothers appeared in London in vaudeville about five years ago they virtually threw the English into a state of torpor. Those still awake when the act ended saluted the visitors with what the British know as the bird and the Americans as the Bronx cheer. And yet when they came back to the British Isles a year later with the same gags, business and general air of depravity, but this time in a motion picture, the excitement and exultation reached such a peak that their Majesties were in danger of their lives from servants suddenly maddened with a desire to carry soup as Harpo might carry it.

What prompts me to these thoughts is the return of Harold Lloyd in his new picture *The Cat's Paw* (Fox). So far as I know Mr. Lloyd always carefully avoided personal appearances, in which he was wisely advised. What he had as an actor was the horn-rimmed glasses, an air of startled naïveté and the finest group of gag men in Hollywood. His success came from the realization that money spent for brains was well invested. On the stage he would have been a very serious case of nonentity and he realized that. It becomes apparent now even to the most alert New York screen critic, always excepting Mr. Mordaunt Hall of the New York Times.

But even so there is something about the screen which heightens both drama and humor. For one thing it is the high general competence of screen productions. A poor stage play is something so embarrassing and terrible that the audience can actively suffer in its presence. Screen plays can be very bad, but you never have the feeling that you are taking part in the public humiliation of a human being who is passing for the moment as an actor. In addition movies have money enough for costumes, setting and photographic tricks and even the worst film goes along from start to finish as if it had some evil reason for wanting to exist. For this reason Mr. Lloyd is able to continue without molestation.

All through the picture I was trying to analyze the humor and suddenly it came to me. The film is made from the Saturday Evening Post serial of Clarence Budington Kelland. But before that Mr. Kelland was an editor and writer for American Boy. *The Cat's Paw* is schoolboy humor of the intellectual level of Boots and Her Buddies. Mr. Kelland, the great wit who is president of the Dutch Treat Club in New York, composed of other great wits, reveals his wittiness in ways so obvious that even the ushers must get screaming after two performances.

It is the story of the young American who has lived in China with his father, the missionary, from an early age. On his first trip back to this country to get a wife he runs into complications which lead to his candidacy for mayor of the city of Stockport. He has only been in town two days, but the laws of voting and office holding are very flexible in the Saturday Evening Post and Stockport for here is Ezekiel Cobb (a typical yokel humor name of the Kelland type) mayor of the city against his will. He wants to quit, but there is a girl of course and what does she do? The originality of all this will murder you. She taunts him. Yes, she taunts him with words about cowardice and he stays and he fights the corrupt politicians. Finally they frame him in a highly unique fashion. He finds a woman in his rooms being strangled by a rough-looking person, who runs at our hero's approach. The lady begs him to protect these valuable papers which the bad man has been trying to seize. Will Ezekiel put them in his safety deposit box? Ezekiel does and they are found there (being stock in various concerns wanting franchises) and he is ruined. But before he is ruined he has twenty-four hours still in office.

At his order the police round up all the crooks in town and take them to the cellar of Ping Ling or something, the suave Celestial friend of Ezekiel. There he gives them their choice. Will they confess their crimes or will they have their heads cut off by the strange oriental with the executioner's axe? The tough guys laugh. Then one of them is taken away. There are screams and soon he comes back lying on a plank, with his head on his chest. The second one is taken off and comes back the same way. By this time the audience is in on the gag, which consists of bumping the

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gentlemen on the dome and then superimposing them on a dummy in a way calculated to give the impression of decapitation. The crooks begin confessing. It is all very hilarious. Ezekiel is absolved. The town is rid of its bad elements. Clutch. Marriage. A few last parables from Ling Po, Mr. Cobb's patron saint.

I must apologize for going on at such length about a plot which is exactly as juvenile as outlined here and is acted with the same air of exaggeration as is utilized by the circus clown. In the midst of this Mr. Lloyd does no acting whatsoever. He moves about quoting the adages of Ling Po and making his eyes large with wonder and nitwittedness and beyond that there is nothing.

The episode of the gang roundup and the beheading, however, was too grave to be overlooked. The fact that Ezekiel Cobb could be dictator for a day and use his power to annihilate his enemies seemed to please the Music Hall audience immensely. "That's just what they should do with them, too," said an aged lady behind me, and added: "Right here in New York." That sounded plausible enough to me on the face of it because I have no love for crooked politicians, but it set me thinking about such things as Germany and even more so of California. The Hearst papers, for instance, have a way of speaking about Communists as "crooks and perverts, the criminal element." The more curious circumstance arises that when there is any "cleaning up," it is always of the Reds and never of the element depicted in *The Cat's Paw*.

Furthermore, the incident of the executioner's sword interested me. For some reason I can never see fun in such playful antics. Last year in *Let 'Em Eat Cake,* their sequel to *Of Thee I Sing,* Messrs. Kaufman and Ryskind had a comic skit with a guillotine. Coming as it did at a time when members of Messrs. Kaufman and Ryskind's race were being beheaded by Hitler's murderers, it seemed to me in doubtful taste, but perhaps I lack the proper feeling for jocularity. A great many people seemed amused by it and it shall certainly never be said of me that I hindered the progress of American business by my protests. If the box office customers enjoyed it, it must have been good.

We are accused of seeing ghosts, we are reproached for crying Fascist at anything we do not like, but the workers of Austria found they cried it far too late. The Klan is forming again in the South, the Vigilantes are galloping through the night in California, the full force of the government at Washington was behind the San Francisco terror. There is no faintest chance that an Ezekiel Cobb is coming into control of an American city for the sake of cleaning out the political crooks or the gangsters. We have had Ezekiel Cobb with us for some time in the guise of F. La Guardia. If there have been heads cracked they have not belonged to the Owney Maddens or the Waxie Gordons, or the gentry of Tammany Hall; they have belonged to the unemployed, to the strikers, to the defenseless protesting their hunger. The exhibition seems to me to have fallen slightly short of humor of the grand quality.

Other New Films

Cleopatra (Paramount): It is remarkable how Cecil B. deMille can photograph so much on such a vast scale and still say nothing. Cleopatra is, of course, not history; it is so badly done and is so noisy that it can't be classed as "entertainment"; and it reeks with so much pseudo-artistry, vulgarity, philistinism, sadism, that it can only be compared with the lowest form of contemporary culture: Hitlerism. This is the type of "culture" that will be fed to the audience of Fascist America.

Bulldog Drummond Strikes Back (20th Century-United Artists). This is an example of the kind of film that Hollywood can best do. It is well written and contains a great deal of amusing dialogue. It is generally a mild satire on mystery stories done in the manner of *The Perils of Pauline*: the gay hero, dauntless and unafraid, the sneaking and slimy Warner Oland as the oriental villain, the stupid police, and the *motif mysterioso* music. Ronald Coleman is such a complete personality that he remains the popular actor whether he plays Raffles, Bulldog Drummond, or Dr. Arrowsmith.

The House of Greed (Soyuzkino): This new Soviet film is based on the famous novel by Saltikov-Shchedrin, *The Golovlov Family*. A. V. Ivanovski, the director has excellently produced this famous subtle and witty picture of the landowning classes of nineteenth century Russia: the cruel distortions of personal and family relationships, the stupidity, drunkenness, debauchery, the exploitation of the peasantry with the Grace of God. The version shown at the Acme Theatre has been badly mangled by the censors but is well worth seeing.

The Lady Is Willing (Columbia): A French farce produced in England with an English cast for Columbia by Gilbert Miller. This film has Leslie Howard as a comedian doing a parody on Leslie Howard as a comedian. The rest of the film is a dull musical comedy without the music. Unless you are crazy about Leslie Howard, don't go to see this one.

The Friends of Mr. Sweeny (Warner Bros.): A more or less dull comedy with some good acting by Charles Ruggles who impersonates the Timid Soul. There is also a Big Bad Bolshevik in this one, frothing at the mouth with the usual Hollywood ideology.

I. L.

Between Ourselves

AMONG articles scheduled to appear in THE NEW MASSES in forthcoming issues are the following:

A series of three articles by Joseph Freeman, under the general title *Ivory Towers—White and Red.* The three articles are called *History Versus Hysteria, Perspectives of 1932,* and *Old Solutions and New Problems.*

Joseph Freeman, one of the founders and editors of THE NEW MASSES, is co-author of *Dollar Diplomacy,* a study of American imperialism; co-author of *Voices of October,* a study of Soviet arts and letters; and author of *The Soviet Worker,* a study of labor conditions in the U.S.S.R. He has been on a leave of absence from THE NEW MASSES since January in order to complete other work.

Other articles:

A series of two, by Alan Calmer, national secretary of the John Reed Clubs: *The First American Labor Poets,* and *The Program of Liberation.*

Communism and the Negro, by James S. Allen, comprising, 1, *The Economic Basis of Oppression,* and 2, *The Program of Liberation.*

By Joshua Kunitz, in his series on Soviet Literature: *VII Mayakovsky: The Story of a Fellow Traveler,* and *VIII, Yessenin: The Peasant Poet.*

A puppet show, or rather a puppet division, organized by the Workers Laboratory Theater, will play a part in the election campaign. Louis Bunin and Yosel Cutler are directing the group. They need scripts, and have inaugurated a contest for the best brief puppet plays on local issues. Five prizes will be offered. They plays must be short. They should require a maximum of ten minutes to perform, but preferably half that time. Dialogue should be crisp, satirical, pointed. Sentences should be short and sharp. Current events should be so handled that issues raised in the Communist Party election platform are stressed. The platform can be obtained in pamphlet form for one cent, at the Workers Book Store, 50 East 13th Street. NEW MASSES writers and readers are invited to enter the contest. Scripts should be addressed to Puppet Contest, Room 500, 50 East 13th Street. The play form is preferred, but the short story form, with a maximum of lialogue, will be accepted.

"It is high time," Dee Brown writes, "that somebody was saying something about Robert Forsythe. A few weeks ago, this name came into my ken when I read one of his all too brief movie reviews. I read the thing over a couple of times and said to myself: 'This is damn good. At last, here is a man who can write serious criticism and at the same time turn phrases that make me laugh.' The next week I read another review, and it was even better. 'This man Forsythe is the best movie critic in America,' I said, 'but the trouble is, if he keeps on writing about the stuff that comes out of Hollywood, he'll soon go off his nut.'

"Sure enough, when he tried to write an article about the movie clean-up campaign, he sort of wandered around in a tangle. 'The hours he has spent in the New York movie cathedrals have softened the man's brain,' I said. 'What a pity.' But last week, he recovered sufficiently to write the best thing he has done, *Hearst's Campaign for Purity and War.* And so I plead with the editors of THE NEW MASSES to please give Robert Forsythe a page, or two pages, every week just for comment about the current scene or such."

Referred to Robert Forsythe.

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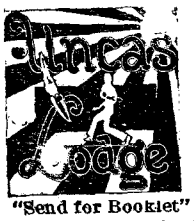

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